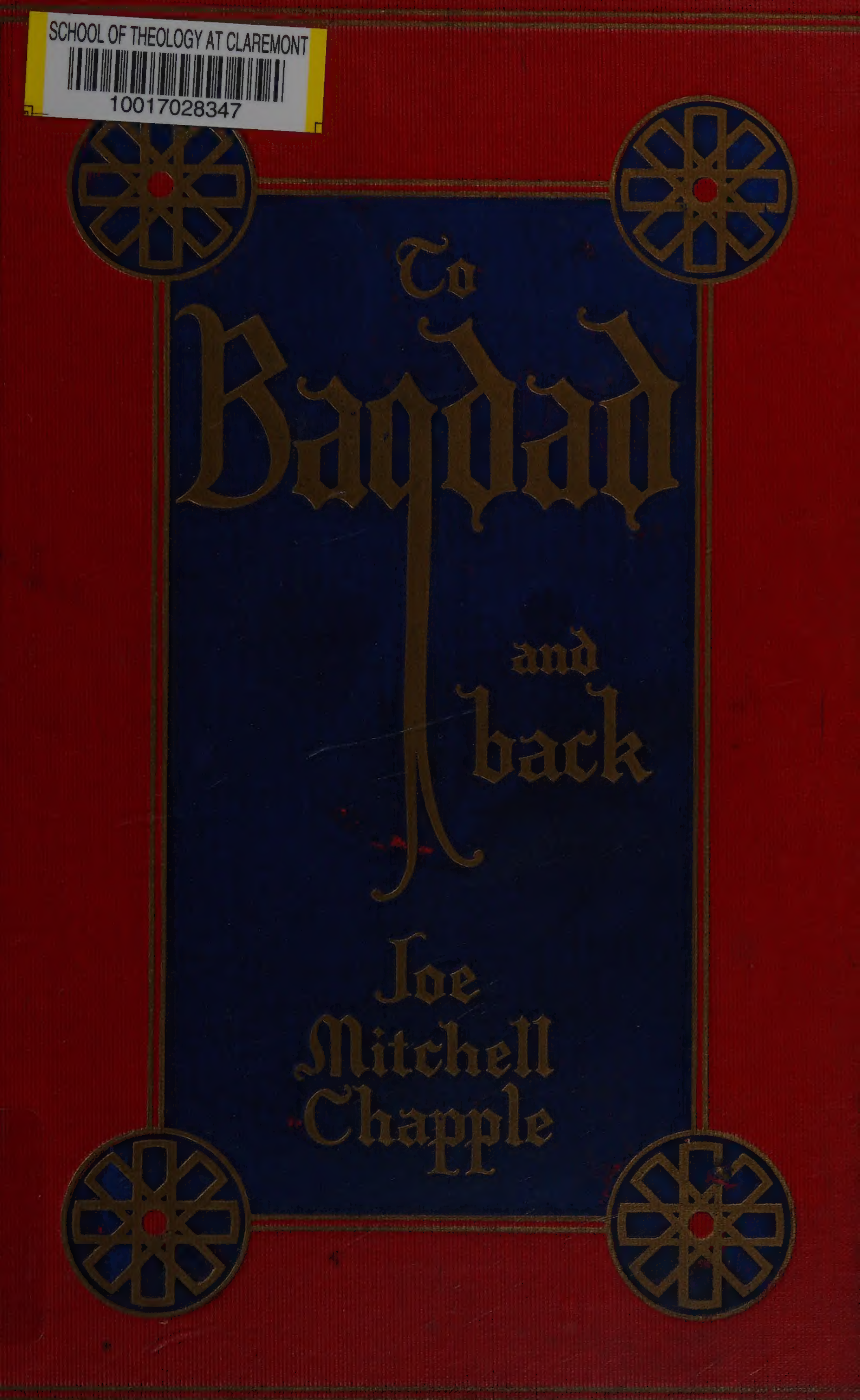


SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AT CLAREMONT
10017028347
To
Bagdad
and
back
Joe
Mitchell
Chapple

A Plowright -

M10 - EAST

20 -

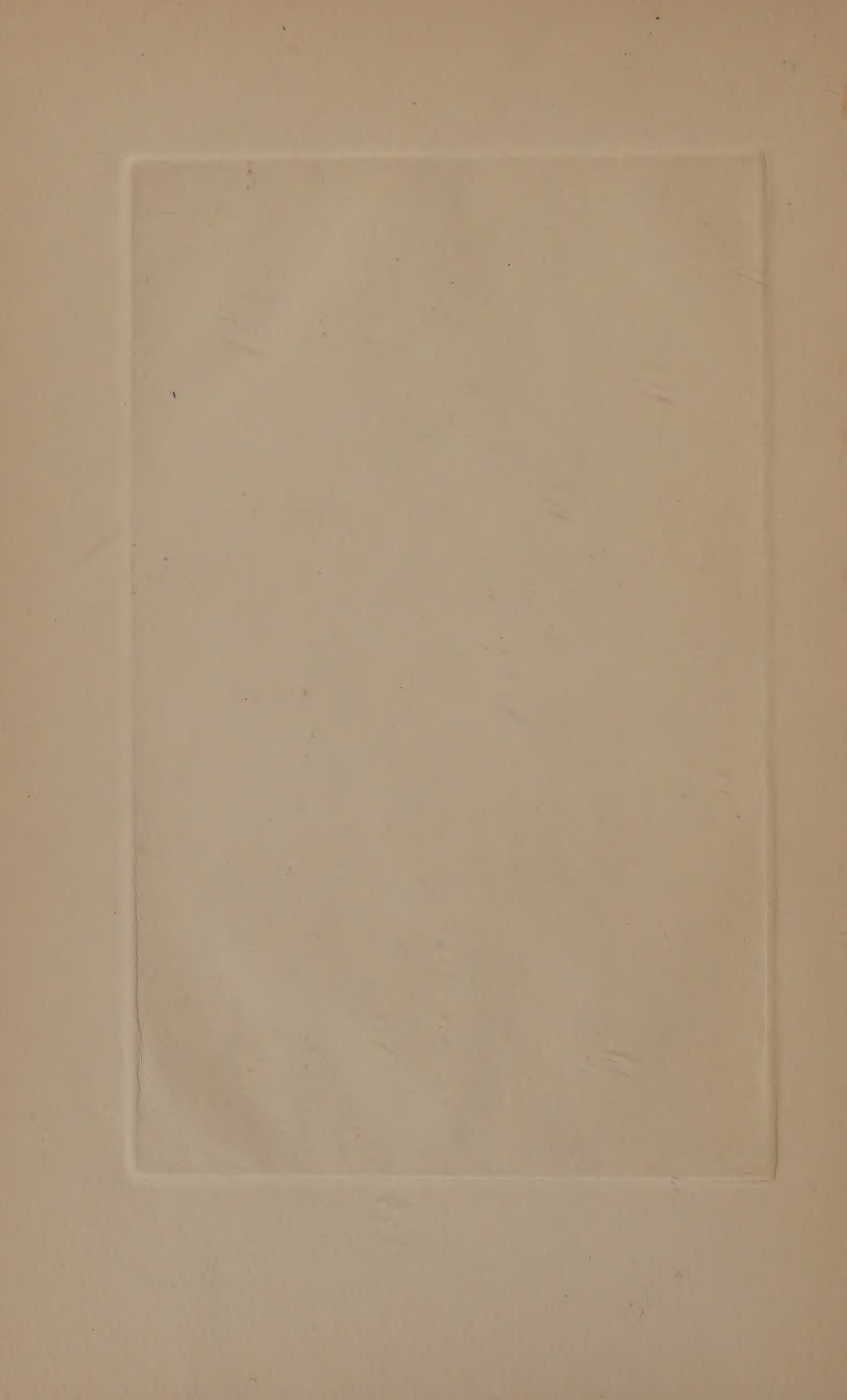








FROM THE ORIGINAL ETCHING "MOHAMMED" BY LEVON WEST Courtesy Kennedy & Company



To Bagdad and Back

by

JOE MITCHELL CHAPPLE

Illustrated

ETCHING BY LEVON WEST
DRAWINGS BY CHAUNCY HOWARD PETERS
COLORED INSERTS BY SAUL M. ARKIN AND KONRAD MEINDL
AND NUMEROUS PHOTOGRAPHS

THE CENTURY CO.
New York London

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

CONTENTS

A PERSONAL PROLOGUE

WHILE I was still a small boy, my mother urged me to read "The Arabian Nights" by way of compromise between the dime novels I had been discovered secretly devouring in the hay loft and the books from the Sunday-school library which I read openly in the parlor. With all this, I did not acquire a reputation as a studious lad, but I was so captivated by "A Thousand and One Nights" that I often read far into the night, wandering, as I read, in an enchanted land, when my mother doubtless thought I was asleep.

During the halcyon days of my first tours abroad there always appeared before me the picture of Bagdad as the ultimate goal of my world travels. The opportunity to visit the Levant came unexpectedly, and the oriental dreams of youth returned. The journey "To Bagdad and Back" was, altogether, a long-deferred ambition gratified—undertaken with the feeling that it was an adventuresome event in my own life, and that I would be supremely selfish not to at least offer to share it with others who have fallen under the magic spell of The Treasure Genii, which has to do with the coast of Syria, Damascus, Cairo and Bagdad—cities that I visited looking for Ali to take the keys and open the chest and show me the jewels, precious stones and gold, and the rich garments—to say nothing of the blessings and prayer of the thoughtful father in the case.

Throughout this journey of something like sixteen thousand miles by train, steamer, automobile, camel back and airplane, I carried with me the well-thumbed books from the attic so closely associated with the days of youth, and as opportunity offered read and re-read the old, old stories of The Talking Bird, The Singing Tree and the Golden Water. At night the familiar pages of the story of Aladdin and Prince Agib came to mind as I read mayhap by the uncertain light of a dying camp fire in the midst of the stunning silence of the Desert or under a sputtering oil lamp in some wayside caravansarie, those tales that have come down to us through the uncounted centuries. It

all harks back to that one alluring phrase that will always arrest the attention of children, as well as their elders, in one form or another: "Once upon a time." From that point you go on and on, to join a great company of choice spirits and donning the magic spectacles of imagination, see marching across the pages of the book the Rocs, Sandalwood, Ivory, Turbans, Ambergris, Cream Tarts with Gold Trimmings, Lettered Apes, Calders, Ghouls and Genii, giant and dwarf and all their relatives, as the black rocks of Camaralzaman spring to life and people the dark shadows that fall across the ancient towers.

What a treasure house of Literature we find in the tales from "The Arabian Nights"! Artists of great renown, world-famous authors and grave and sedate scholars have delved deep into this rich reservoir of Romance, from which much of the literature of past ages has been evolved, and through the processes of a fascinated imagination have instilled ideals and distinctions between right and wrong and inspired ambitions among the children of many races in many countries for many centuries.

How well I recall Andrew Lang's book, opening with the weird and fascinating tales of the Queen Scheherazade who averted the fate of losing her head by reciting every night a tale so fascinating that the series continued on for a thousand and one nights with the captivated Sultan each night calling for "another story."

With the motive indicated, we will now proceed to Bagdad as if on the magic carpet, eliminating prosy details of travel, and remembering the injunction of Maimoune to Danhasch, the genii who had just arrived from far-distant fields: "Be sure thou tellest me no thing but what is true or I shall clip thy wings!"

We will dream betimes, for there is nothing so tragic as one who believes in nothing that he cannot touch. These are like the child who has never held communion with the fairies, and develop into dullards and egotists who never feel the marvelous influence which comes when the elfins wave their wands and direct us to enter the realm of Arabian Night tales—the immortal fragments that will never be superseded in the "infallible judgment of childhood."

* * *

Curtained with selections from the "Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám" are the chapters of this book. I was amazed to realize

how quatrains of this immortal mystic poem fitted appropriately to the text as unfolded. The verses of the complete "Rubáiyát" are utilized, revealing the immortality of the genius who penned the lines—not only preserved through the centuries, but so broad in concept that they can be adapted to almost any story that is told or any phase of life discussed, whether in tales of travel, fiction, drama or verse. In the tender moonlight in the very skies under which the mystical verses were written there came to me the thought that in these lines are symbolic reference to the Last Supper of Christ—the Communion itself—

> **A Book of Verses underneath the Bough (*the Bible*)**
> **A Jug of Wine, A Loaf of Bread—and Thou (*the Christ*)**
> **Beside me singing in the Wilderness—(*Life's journey*)**
> **Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow! (*Heaven*)**

There is never a suggestion of emotional materialism, but an evanescent instant portrayed in these simple words that have left an enduring poetic picture, fitting to express thoughts universal that extend on down through the ages while the roses bloom, fade and bloom again, heralding a life eternal over the lonely grave of Omar at the Naishapur shrine, where I seemed to catch the spirit of the "ancient of days."

Without further musing concerning the purpose of this modest book which aspires to no high place as a history, authentic reference or literary eminence—in the reminiscent glow of youthful dreams we will take our departure and be off—

"To Bagdad and Back!"

Joe Mitchell Chapple

THE ATTIC, Boston
April 10th, 1928

Dedicated to

THE MEMORY OF MY MOTHER
LOUISA MITCHELL CHAPPLE

CHAPTER I

Sighting the Home of "Sinbad the Sailor" and Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves

When the breeze of a joyful dawn blew free
In the silken sail of infancy,
The tide of time flow'd back with me,
  The forward-flowing time of time;
And many a sheeny summer morn,
Adown the Tigris I was borne,
By Bagdad's shrines of fretted gold,
High-walled gardens green and old;
  True Mussulman was I and sworn,
    For it was in the golden prime
      Of good Haroun Alraschid.

—*Tennyson*

TO BAGDAD AND BACK

CHAPTER I

THE commander of the automobile convoy, Jeff Parsons, nudged me while I was dozing after the all-night run across the Syrian Desert. As I opened my eyes, I could scarcely realize where I was. Was it the Grand Central? He nudged me again. As he lit a cigarette in the diffident manner of the Irish-English Tommy Atkins that he was, he pointed without looking and declaimed:

"I say, we're nearly over! Sure enough, begad, there's Bagdad over there!"

Through the windshield of the Cadillac, in the blaze of the morning sun, came my first peep of the City of the Caliphs.

Bagdad began to loom up as a reality when I again sniffed the green grass after a thrilling dash of a night and day across the Syrian desert from Damascus in an automobile, frequently traveling sixty miles an hour and covering a distance that required eighteen days of travel by camel caravan.

Jolting and bumping along the "state-made" black mud roads in the Valley of the Euphrates, we crossed the last small desert of a hundred miles or so, on the banks of the Tigris. The last fifty miles seemed longer than the first five hundred. My legs were as cramped and numbed as if I had tramped the entire distance. It was a bleak, barren country, reminding me of the

Bad Lands of the Dakotas at their worst. Ruin and neglect, assisted by volcanic eruption through the succeeding centuries, had laid waste the gigantic irrigation system that had nurtured the great fertile fields which supported the millions and millions of people of the many nations that had come and gone and are now but names in history.

On the banks of sluggish rivers, dotted here and there by the tattered triangular sails of slow melancholy boats, were occasional groups of Arabs with their camels and donkeys and dismal looking tents. It all seemed like a living picture out of some ancient book. And here I looked forward to a feast, on a Gargantuan scale, on the glories of the splendid past still living in our unromantic day and date.

* * *

Tingling with excitement, I forgot the discomforts of my cramped position in the car. I looked out on the low drab hills and cliffs of dried mud, the valleys and pools and craters of liquid mud—the dreary landscape unrelieved by the least vestige of verdure, with not even a hint of the picturesque colorfulness of our own American plains and deserts. It was as if the Titans had selected this line for trenches in a struggle in due proportion to the bloody see-saw enacted on the Western Front.

Thrilled with the very thought that deep below the level of the road we were traveling on were the ruins of the houses, streets and shops as evidenced by the top of a tower visible on our left, engulfed by an avalanche of mud and lava soil, I felt as if we were desecrating holy ground—a spot made sacred by its venerable antiquity—the cradle where the infant human race

cooed and squirmed and bit and scratched in the beginnings of the tremendous experiment of civilization.

Bagdad, the "God-given," as its Arabic name implies, has only one rival in all this world—Damascus—"pearl of the desert," old as the first attempt at social human amenities. They both stand today as they stood then—sentinels over the sandy Syrian wastes, exchanging the greetings of the cedars of Lebanon with the myrrh trees of Araby.

Old as the hills; old as the winds that fan the desert sands from Basra to Barca, her features scarred but unsullied by the hand of Time that laid low the Eternal City, Bagdad was old when the mythical story of Romulus and Remus told of the mythical origin of Rome. Older than the temples among whose ruins Mary and the Child sought shelter from the wrath of Herod; old, nay, hoary with age—when Moses, the Infant of the Nile led forth half a million freed slaves and gave them an Empire and a Book.

* * *

Set back the clock a thousand years, when Hummurabi engraved the code of equity in cuneiform characters on the obelisks of Babylon; yes, and back the forty centuries thundered by the Little Corsican to his troops in the shadow of Cheops; and back to the time when the Sphinx was yet an unshapen mass of rock in the Virgin bosom of the quarries of Libya.

And then Bagdad was old! Bagdad may well indeed have been young when King Menes I. "lived, moved and had his being" in the hazy dawn of mystic Egypt.

Medes and Persians, Assyrians and Chaldeans and a long chain of now dead civilization sauntered in the

streets and bartered in the marts of Bagdad. Merchants of Tyre and Sidon exported to Carthage the wines of Ispahan exchanged in Bagdad for the linen fabrics and the steel weapons of Damascus; the fleeces of Angora and the wool of Cashmere, the incense and the ivory and the palm oil of India; the ingots of tin from Cornwall and Malacca were stacked with the



wheat of Carthage, with the spices of Arabia in the warehouses of Bagdad. It was here, too, the burnous of the sheik and yashmak of the harem fluttered in the breeze, and the shield and the lance of the bedouin glinted in the setting sun over the narrow sidewalks in front of the shops of the haggling Arab traders.

Stirred with the emotions aroused by these thoughts, we were approaching this place over a road that might well have been at least a camel-path six thousand years ago.

Yes, there it was, Bagdad bathed in the glory of an Oriental afternoon sun! As the automobile bounced over a new viaduct bridge and shot across the narrow-gauge railroad track with its "Stop, Look and Listen" sign in Arabic, my mind flew back to creative

America, recalling New York, Boston, Chicago and San Francisco, whose very life blood flows through arteries of steel rails and bridges so strangely out of place here; and in a flash it came to me—right here is the gateway of the old wide, wide world—Bagdad.

Down the narrow streets of the old city we rode, the people stopping to look at us with as much interest as an American boy watches a circus parade—not gladly or sadly—a stolid ox-like stare in return to my salaams. Nor did they acknowledge my hailing signal or genial "Hello Bill."

Every city has its own peculiar atmosphere: London has its fog; Paris its mists from the Seine; New York its scent of the garbage fleet and Fulton Market; Chicago, its packing house flavor. Bagdad, however, has each of these in succession and then a pet preparation all its own. The fuel used in preparing the evening meal, as we arrived, was a combination of mud and cow manure and it certainly registered a new experience for our olfactory organs.

And now over a pontoon bridge across the Tigris, separating the older from the newer city, the motor honk-honked as it charged into the crowds. How Jeff ever avoided making a "hit" was a puzzle to me.

"If you try to dodge 'em, you hit 'em. They think backwards," he explained.

They certainly were entitled to consider themselves fixtures, for had not their people been there for fifty centuries?

Bagdad, becoming a strategical point during the war, had experienced a real estate boom. It had been occupied by the British Army, and later visited by numerous rich oil prospectors. These people seemed to be expecting showers of gold—judging from the

fifty thousand tons of Pittsburg pipe delivered on the oil fields—and yet I had not seen a gold coin in eight thousand miles! Some of the shops appeared neglected, decayed—like a mining town in the West "gone broke." Galvanized iron roofing—anything to provide protection against the sun and rain—had been improvised into buildings and shops.

* * *

To me the Bagdad of the long ago compared with the present desolate, drab shambles now called Bagdad, where bats and goats, donkeys and Arabs share and dispute the shelter of the ruins of the palaces whose pristine grandeur had no rival in all history, and where it is recorded once took place a state funeral in which marched eight hundred thousand men and sixty-five thousand women, to say nothing of the millions of spectators—this according to the authentic source of Gibbons' Rome—was a sad reminder of what time's changes had accomplished. And right here, to help you visualize the "change and decay" of which the hymnist wrote, even in our metropolis of New York on Armistice Day, the parade on Fifth Avenue did not approach in size that throng which marched past the imperial palaces, gorgeous and glorious beyond our imagination, to say nothing of the hanging gardens and parks, before which the sky scrapers of New York and Central Park would pale into insignificance.

It is a stupendous tragedy, comparable with one we all must have seen on a tiny scale at some time—an abandoned, deserted crumbling old farm homestead, once the pride of the community, the home of happy mortals, but now a refuge for stray tramps and curious denizens of the wilderness.



View of Bagdad from Bab-al-muadhdham. Fifty centuries look down upon us from the domes and minarets of this old, old town, whose desolate drab shambles and bat-infested ruins are all that now remain of what, when history was young, were imperial palaces—gorgeous and glorious beyond the wildest dreams of modern imagination



Inside the tiny shops Jewish merchants sat, their legs crossed, placidly awaiting customers, just as they were wont to do in the age-old times. Everywhere I looked the people appeared grim and silent, but not unhappy. The beggar women, with mutilated faces, clasping in their arms babes whose sore eyes were covered with flies, was a gruesome sight and a reminder of the prevailing poverty of the Orient.

It was all so different from my conception of the land of Ur.



CHAPTER II

'Twas in Bagdad that the Student Omar Khayyam sang His Immortal "Rubaiyat"

I

Awake! for Morning in the Bowl of Night
Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to Flight;
  And Lo! the Hunter of the East has caught
The Sultán's Turret in a Noose of Light.

II

Dreaming when Dawn's Left Hand was in the Sky
I heard a Voice within the Tavern cry,
  "Awake, my Little ones, and fill the Cup
Before Life's Liquor in its Cup be dry."

III

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted—"Open then the Door!
  You know how little while we have to stay,
And, once departed, may return no more."

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

CHAPTER II

HOTEL MAUD was to be my home in the land of the Arabian Nights. It was named for General Maud, who commanded the British forces which occupied the city during the World War. The first thing to greet the eyes of the dusty, thirsty American visitor entering the great courtyard of the hotel is a large five-foot sign in English: "American Bar." Real masters of diplomacy, these British! On the walls posters proclaimed "The beer sold here is British beer." It is not foreign beer. Were they already feeling the effect of German competition?

There was no wrangling over rooms at the office. Rooms with bath had been unheard of things in this metropolis of Iraq, but the hotel manager announced that fourteen bath tubs were on the way. He then asked if I was to remain all winter. Following the porter back through the courtyard, I passed through a line of sombre-faced servants of the hotel, dressed in long flowing white robes and black tasseled red fezes. They gave me the deference which they thought was due a millionaire from far-off America.

Climbing two long winding staircases outside the building, which must have been built originally with the idea that it was to be inhabited by a race of prehistoric giants, since the steps are so high, it is a marvel to me, with my abbreviated legs, how I ever managed to reach the room at the top which was to be my Bagdad domicile.

From the high ceiling hung a huge fan five feet in diameter. While the porter was engaged in getting it

in motion, I looked about me. The floor was covered with rugs and the walls were hung with them. There were rugs in every nook and corner of the place, which furnished a cosy welcome. The solemn-visaged porter did not bother to open the windows, although the room was close. Fresh air is usually hot air, and means nothing for breathing purposes on the Tigris.

Outside the prison-like openings in the massive walls, a group of workers were having a good time. Although I couldn't understand a word that was spoken, I knew they were relating ancient jokes. Now and again one of the group would burst into a fragment of some old Arabian song in which his companions joined in the chorus. Their weird chanting awakened a suspicion that I might be listening to the original "Arabian Nights." It plunged me deeper than ever into the fascination and mystery of the East.

I washed up. This is a simple statement, but taking a bath and washing up is far from a simple thing in Bagdad. In the first place there was no such thing as running water, and soap never awaits you. What water is brought into the room comes in bottles. After a dusty trip of many miles on my way to the city, it took several of these bottles to remove the caked-on yellow dust of the deserts. Later, looking into a small mirror, and recognizing myself as somewhat more presentable, I proceeded down the steep staircase in search of something to eat.

Passing through the courtyard where the attendants were preparing dinner—for in the Orient much of the cooking is done in the open—the mingled aromas of the various native dishes—all a sort of glorified hash—were appetizing. The bottle of soda served to me at the bar at which I stopped on my way to

the dining room aroused the interest of the attendants, as well as the numerous Englishmen present who insisted upon bemoaning the fate of the poor American to whom intoxicating liquor is contraband. There seemed everywhere an absorbing interest in what they termed "the great American experiment."

While dining that evening I reveled in a wondrous view of the waters of the Tigris shading the undercurrent of moonlight. It was a soothing experience. A stillness pervaded the place. I sat in hushed silence and listened to the sounds that came up from the river. The banks were dotted with "goofahs"—tiny round boats made of wicker-work and pitch. On the bow and stern of the piers of the bridge were natives preparing for a night's lodging. Sitting quietly gazing at the strange life beneath, the sultry oriental night closed in, and darkness from a vagrant cloud brought a refreshing coolness. Soon the stars began to fairly flash. With their coming over the city, the tiny electric lights seemed to blink and fade.

Along the narrow, dimly-lighted streets there was a furtive rushing hither and thither of natives hurrying to find a lodging place for the night. They sat huddled together in dimly-lighted parks enjoying soft drinks. The moon came out in all its Eastern splendor, and with its inexplicable witchery cast a halo of romance over the squalid scenes of Omar's historic rendezvous.

Now I could understand the poetic influence that stirred the students of ancient Persia. There is something alluring in the tender evening air of Bagdad. I began quoting "Omar Khayyam" and wondered no longer at the peculiar poetic vernacular of the natives.

Although weary, I felt that I must make every minute count and explore its every nook and crevice to see something of the night life of the capital of Iraq. Imbued with the magic spell of the moonlight, I went out into the streets of the city and made my way through a surging sea of humanity. At the entrance to the bridge I came upon a typical Arab dance hall, where now and then a sheik dropped in for a bit of amusement, expressing his approval by throwing coins at the dancers—the rotund ladies being the favorites. Inside were a score of dancers, who were swaying to and fro to the tune of an Arabic jazz band. The musicians seemed to have a faculty for using all the discords possible to disturb the human hearing. The orchestra consisted of a modern piano, some sort of a native string instrument constantly thrumming the chromatic scale, and a wheezy clarinet that added a few dismal and odd half-tones. It was hard for me to believe that music, as it is known to the civilized world, had its origin in the East—perhaps in this very country. That night the sheiks were in town and money was flowing freely into an American cash register. It reminded one of Bangor, Maine, in the old days when a logging camp in the North woods had been paid off.

Up and down the cobblestones little carriages, ornamented with plumes, drawn by diminutive horses about the size of large jack rabbits, went their zigzag way. Now and then an automobile came chugging along, fairly tearing into the masses, scattering the people in all directions. In the shadows the streets seemed teeming with mysterious slinking figures which, for all we knew, were laying in wait for spoils. Thieving and briganding for centuries has been a popular and honored profession—the real crime was in being caught.

The dimly-lighted vestibule of a motion picture theatre loomed up close by. It was almost deserted at this hour, and compared with our American picture palaces, looked dismal and uninviting. There was a lack of music, and the bright lights proclaiming our "movie" houses were missing. The native fans are most discriminating. The only expression of appreciation noticeable was when the picture of some animal or bird appeared upon the screen. They seemed more interested in the picture of a winking owl that flashed across the sheet than in the affinity kiss of the movie star. The utter stillness of the place, together with the fatigue of my journey, lulled me to sleep. I awoke a short time later feeling a bit rested and, leaving the picture palace, resumed my survey of the streets of Bagdad.

On the outskirts of the town next morning we passed fields dotted with flocks of queer-looking Persian sheep. The conspicuous part of the animals were their huge fat tails, considered most delicious eating. These are the flocks we read of in the tales of the "Arabian Nights." They are peculiar to this environment. Many attempts have been made to breed them elsewhere, but the fat tail promptly disappears in other climates, under what one of my sheik friends called "physiologic incompatability." Here was a restful sight after the squalid gaudiness of the bazaar. The thousands of brown fleeces, among which now and then appeared an animal of pure white, and occasionally even the proverbial black sheep, such as the late Elbert Hubbard at one time sent to John D. Rockefeller as a peace offering, made a pleasing and inspiring pastoral picture of Biblical times.

Here, and beyond where the sands stretch out endlessly, are the homes of the now famous sheiks. These

sheiks are rulers of small or large tribes of the desert. These Bedouins maintain the purest Arabic inflections. I met many of these strange men during my stay in Bagdad, and for the benefit of those young ladies who are admirers of motion picture sheiks, I wish to say that although occasionally one meets with their "idol" sheik, these occasions are far apart. For the most part they are middle-aged, or elderly men. They are very often stout and seem to possess a round and full Falstaffian form. All in all, I hardly think they would cause any heartaches to the female contingent of movie fans.

In almost every case the sheiks enquired about prohibition. They were even more interested than the Englishmen, for they seemed much concerned about the American drought—and that's saying much for them. The Moslems were deeply and sincerely interested in learning something of the Volstead law, which to them is nothing more than a cryptogram. Finally, the reason for their interest dawned on me: the Moslems are the original prohibitionists! Liquor is forbidden by their laws under a penalty almost as severe as that of arson. They sought to justify, in the light of Occidental experience, the centuries-old liquor laws of Mohammed.

Visiting their mosques, I watched the pilgrims as they entered. They took off their shoes and fell reverently upon their knees on the rugs. Their bodies swayed to and fro and their heads touched the ground as they chanted the praises of Allah. Think of it—over three hundred and fifty millions, or one-fifth of the population of the world, say their prayers in Arabic, the dominating tongue of the Levant. It has its different dialects and varied inflections, but the

Arabic language is essentially the language of the Moslems.

That afternoon there was a race at the Jockey Club. Although the ponies were Arabian, the riders were all English. Among these were jockeys who had ridden and won the Derby at Epsom. The English have a way of discovering just what interests the people and what they will enjoy. It was like a fair-ground in a Western city. The spielers and the Indian fakirs were all shouting out their wares in such poetic phrases as "Come, my sweet, and buy my sweets," that did honor to "Omar Khayyam's" quatrains.

Having satisfied my every wish for sight-seeing, I now turned to the more pragmatic occupation of discovering facts and figures concerning the new nation of Iraq. This country is an initial experiment in the creation of new independent governments in the Orient, conforming to modern ideals, that will bring the world together into a more friendly family of nations.



CHAPTER III

Petrol supplants the Gold Treasures sought in the prime of Haroun Alraschid

Anight my shallop, rustling thro'
  The low and bloomed foliage, drove
  The fragrant, glistening deeps, and clove
The citron-shadows in the blue;
  By garden porches on the brim,
The costly doors flung open wide,
  Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,
And broider'd sofas on each side:
  In sooth it was a goodly time,
  For it was in the golden prime
    Of good Haroun Alraschid.

—*Tennyson*

CHAPTER III

AFTER spending several days and nights in indulging my spirit of romance in Bagdad, I was impressed—not by its glitter and glamor—but by its sordidness. Fancy had taken wings and left in its wake the grim reality of the place. I saw no longer the scenes of bygone days with all their splendor; gone were my dreams of Araby. Bagdad, the capital of Iraq, appeared to me now in its true light. I saw its squalor and tragedy, its wretchedness and filth—the East Side in New York at its worst was a Paradise Alley in comparison.

Once more I became my matter-of-fact self. Disappointed and sad on realizing that this was what I had come so far to see, I had a desire to leave it all behind me. I longed to be among my own kind and to hear my own language, and so I inquired where the foreigners of the city usually congregated. Fortunately I was invited to visit the Club on the river embankment.

Through clouds of dust I came to the Alwiyah Club. The building surmounts a high wall. This is necessary as the river rises almost sixty feet at the time of the annual inundation. In the center of the river is a large island that is entirely submerged during the freshets. The waters of the mountain streams come a long way, absorbing, as they flow along, the alluvial soil of the district and feeding the green scum that gathers in the rivers at Bussorah, where lived Sinbad, the Sailor, and where the first cotton fields in history were cultivated.

As I entered the building a crowd gathered to gaze

at the lone American in his Sudan helmet, who had just arrived. They tried to make me feel at home and brought ice water, considered a treat in Iraq. An odd armchair, in which one sits with feet elevated, was brought in, and I needed very little urging to sink into its comfortable depths. The formalities over, the conversation naturally turned upon the country and its products.

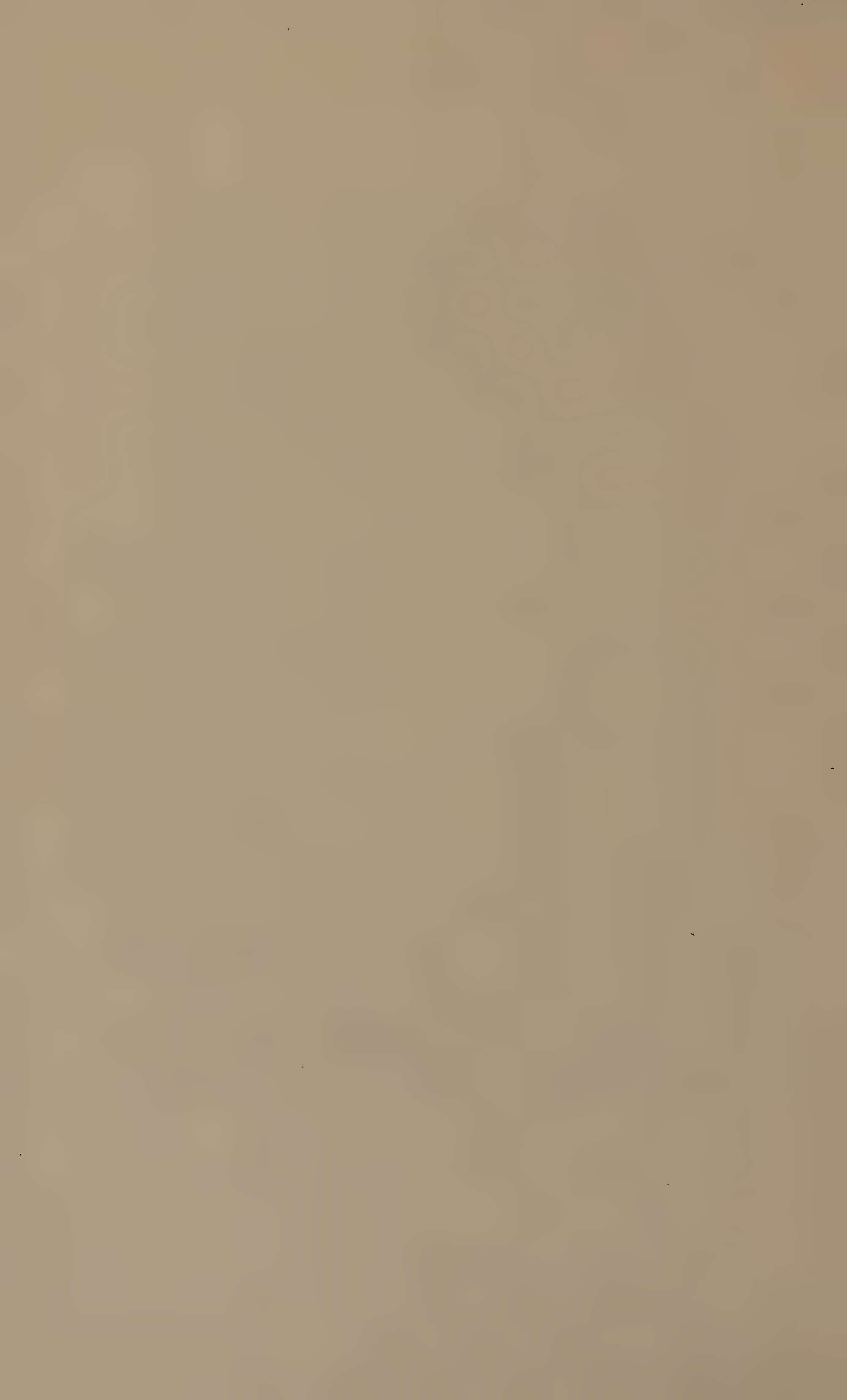
"We are in 'the Land of Two Rivers,' as Iraq has been poetically christened—a country created under a British mandate: That's why we British are here," said Crowthers, the banker from Basra. The new nation, he told me, includes old Mesopotamia. The work of organization was being carried on by Sir Henry Dobbs, the High Commissioner.

Mr. Davison, his legal counsellor, who was temporarily borrowed from the Sudan, was being given a farewell "ancient and honorable" dinner, which I attended. He had just completed his work of preparing a constitution which is now awaiting the final confirmation of the newly-created Iraq parliament. The new-born flag of Iraq was cheered, together with the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes. The native Assembly adjourned on August 2, after the declaration that Iraq is "a sovereign and independent state with rights indissoluble and inalienable." Doesn't that sound like Patrick Henry?

"It is a hereditary monarchy, y' know," said Davison of the Sudan, "with a Senate and Assembly elected by two classes of qualified voters. The first, or secondary citizen, must be twenty years of age; the second, or primary, must be twenty-five (similar to the Constitution of the new Irish Free State). The people cannot be taxed either directly or indirectly without a vote



Ruins of ancient Babylon, suggesting the modern skyscrapers in their construction. Observe the perfect symmetry of every brick, how straight the walls still stand after the passing of long centuries of time, and the exact angles of the corners of the buildings, showing that the workmen of ancient times were consummate masters of their craft



of the Parliament, and when so taxed all classes must be taxed alike. Personal freedom and the right of free speech are guaranteed to all.

This was stated with the finality of the man who wrote the constitution of the new nation located in ancient Mesopotamia.

The polygot nature of the inhabitants made me wonder just which race would have the upper hand in the new government. Chief George Hawthorne, V. C., of the Police Department, wearing his Victoria Cross, seemed to be a walking encyclopedia of information on the country, and answered my query:

"Well," he said, "all in all, the responsibility of running the state will be pretty well divided between the different races and religions. Each district, you understand, is represented in the legislature. In the apportionment of these representatives, Bagdad comes first, and the apportion of the delegates outside of Arabs consists of two Christians and two Jews. Mosul has an allowance of two Christians and one Jew. Then come the smaller districts headed by Basra, with its one Christian and one Jew, and so on down the line. Sort of even all around, don't you think?" he concluded.

An English officer who had crossed the desert with me now felt acquainted after the Scotch and soda, and became interested in enlightening his new-made American friend.

"Being a member of the legislature isn't so bad a job, either," he said. "Deputies—that's what they call the members of the upper house, y' know—receive a salary of five thousand rupees, and the members of the other body get four thousand. In American money that's about $1,500. Not so bad for about six months' work—what?"

"Religion is curiously mixed up with the politics of Iraq," another told me. "King Feisal, a brother of the King of Trans-Jordania and the King of Hedjian, was chosen as ruler because he was the nearest descendant of the prophet Mohammed."

The nation's flag even calls attention to the Mohammedan faith. It consists of a triangle of red at the top, with stripes of black, white and green. The latter is the holy color of the Mohammedans, and represents the sacred city of Mecca. The people of Iraq thus revere their flag for a twofold reason. There were three stars in the triangle of the original flag, but the new law will provide for only two.

Arabian, spoken everywhere in Iraq, is the official language. It is used in the publication of all government affairs, and a printed report of the proceedings in the Iraq parliament looks like a flock of stenographic notes let loose.

After dinner I decided to make a call on John Randolph, then American Consul, and obtain another angle on the new Iraq government. He responded to the number "Central 39" with real American alacrity. That telephone was the most homelike thing I had seen for a long time. And just think, they understood English at the Bagdad exchange.

* * *

And, oh say! if there is one thing that always thrills me in my world travels, it is the sight of an American flag, especially when floating over the residence of an American consul, for that to me is the symbol of home. In Bagdad, down the main street in an area that was rather bleak and barren, I found an old residence where John Randolph, the American Consul, lives and

conducts the business of the U. S. A. There was a courtyard inside, in which a fountain played merrily, and, of course, the inevitable high steps built for long-legged men.

As I entered the servants were scrubbing the old stones. Even these Orientals seemed to feel the distinction of the official badge they wore. Several of them hailed me in very decent English, saying, "How are the folks?" In fact, I met more people in Bagdad who understood English than I did in France. They seem to have an earnest desire to understand the language.

In the basement, under the heavy Moorish arches, John Randolph has his office. How good the orderly and systematic arrangement of the place looked! What a welcome sight were the flat-topped desks, the letter files, and typewriters! Inside that room I felt I was in America. On the walls were pictures of Lincoln, Washington, McKinley, Wilson and Harding. Indeed it seemed like home when the lemonade was passed and Mr. Randolph smilingly said: "Nothing more than H_2O here!"

The consul lives on the upper floor, and, like the natives, is wise enough to sleep on the roof. John Randolph hails from St. Lawrence County, New York, and has been many years in the consular service in Constantinople, Egypt, and other parts of the Orient. He understands the language of these parts and he knows Iraq as well as he knows "up state."

When I told him that I was from Boston, he took me for an archeologist.

"I'm sorry," he said, "but you can't carry away any antiquities. A law to that effect has been passed in Iraq since Howard Carter made his famous King Tut discovery in Egypt."

He produced and read the new law then and there.

"No antiquity whatsoever shall be alienated by any private person without the consent of the Minister of Communications and Works, such consent to be given in the form of a special or general license."

Naturally, I gave up what idea I may have had of appropriating any of the strange baked-clay tablets of Babylon. I then told the official representative of



Uncle Sam of my object in coming to the land. He smiled indulgently.

"I see," he said. "We have had so many intellectual appearing men from Harvard and other colleges who come here to study the country's antiquities at close hand, that when you mentioned 'Boston,' I felt sure that you were another recruit for the research and survey connected with the excavations.

"You are about the first American I've seen since Lowell Smith landed in his 'Around-the-World Flight.' He made Bagdad a terminal point, and was given a great reception by the English aviators, who were saddened, but not embittered, by the fact that their own English plane had met with disaster. In fact, one English officer said in my hearing, 'These lads have plucked a fair laurel to place on their rumpled heads, and have



Ashar Creek—Fruit Bazaar. There are no department stores in the Orient—no places where you can buy fish, fruit, flesh and fowl under one roof. There the housewife really goes "marketing" as in the days of the Apostles and collects the various items for a meal from a dozen different places—and carries them home herself in a basket unless she is rich enough to have a servant, or can afford to hire a porter to accompany her



written their names on the same scroll as Vitus Bering, that stout-hearted Dane over whose cold grave among the sand-dunes of the Komandorskies they had flown.' Quite a tribute, don't you think?" he asked.

I thought of Maclaren at Akyab, Burma, with his beautiful machine a wreck, and what he must have thought after that crash which shattered his hope of continuance of the British flight around the world.

"When the aviators arrived in Bagdad," he continued enthusiastically, "they were greeted by a large crowd, the older aviators hailing them as great-hearted fellow-flyers—not as rivals or opponents. They were all gallant comrades of the air. Maclaren's message, sent from Burma, where he remained with his crippled plane, was handed to them. It was brief and to the point—'Well done.' "

An impressively uniformed kavar who entered the room drew up easy chairs. Our talk had evolved into a discussion of the new government and its problems. The consul declared that there was quite a stir in the House of Commons in London when the Anglo-Iraq treaty was discussed and the arrangement formally ratified by the Iraq parliament.

"Great Britain has had a burdensome problem on its hands," he declared. "It cost the nation about $25,000 to arrange for a provisional administration until Iraq gets on its feet. There has been some trouble with the Turks concerning the northern border, but the matter was submitted to the League of Nations. The plan now is for the British eventually to withdraw as far south as Basra, which will be retained in defence of the navy's interests in the Anglo-Persian oil fields, and in the interest of general trade in the Gulf, adjacent to India."

In the consulate's extensive filing cabinets there was available at a minute's notice every fact and figure concerning the nation of Iraq. Randolph provided me with all the data which I desired immediately and was all ready to explain the cold statistics in a most chatty and informal way.

"Look at that map on the wall and you will see that modern Mesopotamia is a fertile plain, seven hundred miles long and one hundred and fifty miles wide, reaching from the Persian Gulf to Kindertun. There are three million people in the country, two-thirds of whom are Arabs. A large percentage of them are engaged in the raising of sheep, cattle and dates. The latter is a most important product, for of the thirty-three millions of exports, over four millions go to the United States in the form of dates.

"Iraq contains 143,250 square miles, almost all of ancient Mesopotamia, a long narrow stretch of arid land reaching from Turkey to the Perisan Gulf.

"Its creation was inspired by motives similar to those which actuated the re-birth of Poland—a barrier strip sacred to the neutrality of small nations—a moral challenge to the sportsmanship of greater ones.

"While the struggle for bare survival of two of the most powerful empires of all time actually took place on a distant battlefield, this spot was really the chess board of their petty intrigues and political machinations.

"Let it not be thought that it was for the control of the Mesopotamian oil fields this game of checkmate and stalemate was played. It had its origin a generation before America burned billions of gallons of gasoline to get rid of it as a dangerous waste product. The iron age had not yet reached its climax—the steel butterfly of aviation not yet even a chrysalis.

"Empire domination with the older method of the sword was by that time taboo, and the 'sphere of influence' method came into vogue. With Germany cautiously feeling her way for a railway from Berlin to Bagdad, and England everlastingly watchful for an opportunity to hinder her without creating an unnecessary ripple on the surface of World Peace, one is led to think it was the natural resources of Mesopotamia that were at stake; but that was not so. Neither England nor Germany wanted Mesopotamia. Even now it is doubtful whether the importance of the political mandate is not far greater than the economic value of oil. India was the real objective, and even at that Germany had no use for the country except to break the back of the British Lion by disposing of British rule in India. Germany failed to build the thoroughfare to the east; England succeeded in raising the barrier.

"When the crash came, the kings and knights betook themselves elsewhere, leaving the Ottoman pawns alone on the chess board to be ignominiously hurled from the scheme of things by the whirlwind campaign of Colonel Lawrence, whose brilliant exploits in no way give place to the best of Alexander the Great. A mere boy in years like Alexander, yet he destroyed nothing worth preserving; he built where Alexander wrecked; and he drank of the best that ever filled the cup of glory on the spot where Macedonia's madman died, bemoaning new worlds to conquer.

"But whatever may be the motives which underlay the founding of Iraq, the future alone can tell their outcome. The value in pounds sterling of all the oil likely to be extracted by exploitation may prove a poor recompense for the initial impulse given the young

nation. Suppose their nationals retained the oil, would not it be natural to expect to see them drift under the cumbrous load of easy wealth to a condition similar to that of our own Oklahoma Indians?

"Bagdad, the capital, is the most important gateway to Persia, and if the irrigation project and the plans for power and water are developed, there's no telling what may happen, and this area may come back to the glory of its former record for productivity and provide prosperity for millions."

Referring to some papers brought to him, he continued: "Mesopotamia imports some American products. Lamps, cotton piece goods, silk goods, sugar, tobacco and a host of other things are on the list. Phonographs and typewriters are heavily taxed. There is some demand for American-made auto vehicles, and in this line Henry Ford's name, like that of Abou Ben Adhem, leads all the rest. Agricultural implements are admitted free of duty, and so one finds the modern tractor throughout the agricultural districts. In Iraq, such tractors are sometimes classified as limousines."

Chatting for some time on the outlook for the future of the nation, I was informed that King Feisal is generally considered a competent administrator. With the legislature which, by law and his oath of office he is compelled to invoke, working behind him, the prospects looked rather bright. King Feisal was first offered to Syria, but France was not ready to use a King in its mandate. England has put three kings upon the throne. The first was King Hussain of Hejaz, who has an ambition to be the real Caliph; the second was King Amer-Abdulah of Trans-Jordania; the third is King Feisal of Iraq. As the consul, in poker terms,

expressed it, "Three kings and two queens—that makes a perfectly good full house!"

Here I was, just in time for the christening of a new infant government. Later, at the British residency, I was shown the sample of the virgin ballots which were to be cast by these descendants of a people who occupied Chaldea, the cradle of civilization—the land from whence Abraham and his people, leading their flocks, moved westward with the first rude beginnings of culture. As I marked the ballot given me with the same red pencil with which I marked the proof of a Massachusetts primary ballot back in the U. S. A., I felt a strange emotion. My action, I thought, symbolized the union of the East and the West—the old and the new—in a sort of electoral fellowship. Truly, government by the people shall not perish from the earth.

With my head fairly bulging with data, I was taken once more to the "Alwiyah Club," where they pay in pink coupons, and have picturesque garden parties on the banks of the Tigris. It was fascinating at the club to hear Al Anisah Hasiba Daoud, the daughter of a well-known Bagdad citizen, recite her arguments on "Why Women Should be Educated in the Orient." She had the deep, dark eyes of the Levant and the piquant way in which she wore her veil, folded around her head and showing her eyes as she was speaking, was fascinating. Her description of the creation of woman is a new version that interested me very much:

"Allah created the world and prepared it for habitation by humanity. After he had made Adam, and placed him in the Garden of Eden, Adam must have felt lonely, having no one with whom to while away the time, to help him on his difficulties and to share his secrets. Then one day Adam fell into a deep sleep, and when he

awoke he saw Hawwa, the Mother of the World, lying by his side. He looked at her and she was smiling; he talked with her, and found that she cooed most sweetly; he touched her, and she was finer and more subtle than the zephyr air.

"And then Adam rubbed his side and found that there was something missing, and he realized that Allah had created her from his rib so that she might be near his heart—not from his head, so that she should govern him, or from his feet, so that he should tread on her. Consequently, it was deemed that there were two roads to heaven: the path of religion and the path that leads to a woman's heart."

* * *

A chat with an American missionary who is stationed at Teheran, the capital of Persia, brought out the fact that the modern function of the missionary is in medical service. He was a doctor, the son of a missionary, who had been forty years in the Orient. His wife and family were much interested in the rotund American. When his two little tots, born in Persia, climbed on my knee and began talking to me in Arabic, I wondered whether they were really Americans, but when they said "candy," I understood and was ready for them. They had at last found their American tongues.

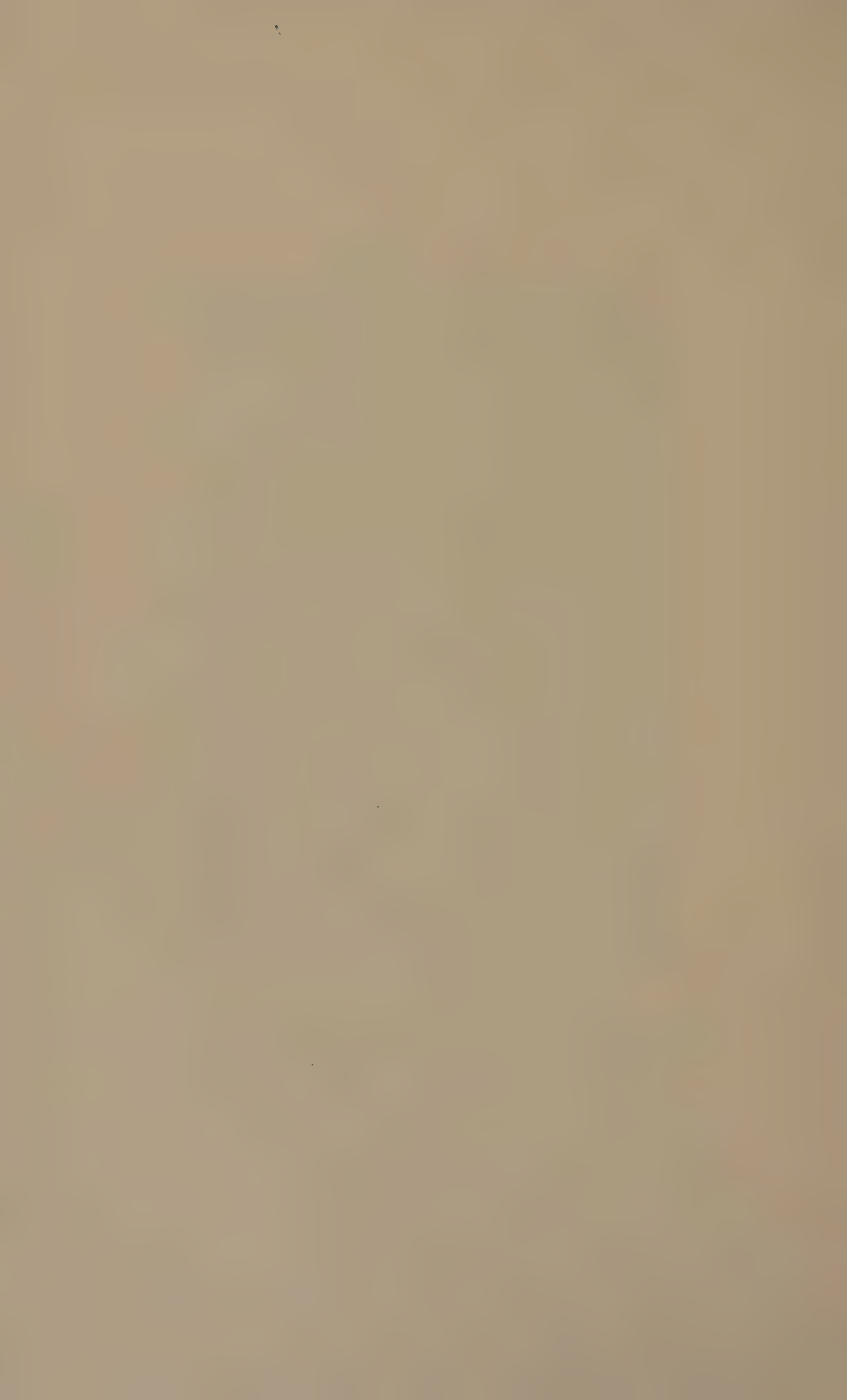
In the Orient the sweets are very sweet and the lemons are very sour. When refreshments were ordered, it was a cherry lemonade, thoroughly pink, that was served to us, and we drank a toast to the dear old U. S. A. The cherry is associated with America in Iraq because George Washington and the cherry tree is as familiar to them as the "Arabian Nights" is to American youth.

Returning to Hotel Maud, I crossed the courtyard and entered the Moorish constructed vault, with its somewhat rathskeller-like appearance, and again the sign "American bar" stared me in the face. Planting my foot on the once familiar rail, I ordered soda water and was again the cynosure of all eyes. Around the bar was a group of English oil-well prospectors on their way to Mohamen, the site of the Anglo-Persian oil fields, which is looked upon as one of the rich treasures secured by England through its mandate. Their talk reminded me of the days when the Glen Pool was being exploited in Oklahoma, and they insisted upon a "night cap." Tell it not in Gath, breathe it not in the streets of Askalon—it was not H_2O this time.





Ashar Creek as seen from Whiteley Bridge. This picturesque and colorful scene greets the eye of the traveler as he gazes upon this characteristic bit of the Orient. The deep-laden, clumsy boats are a survival of an ancient and obsolete design originated thousands of years before naval architecture became a science



CHAPTER IV

Haunts of the Author of the "Rubaiyat" as a Roving Student. "Where Omar smote 'is bloomin' lyre" (Kipling)

IV

Now the New Year reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,
  Where the *White Hand of Moses* on the Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground suspires.

V

Irám indeed is gone with all its Rose,
And Jamshyd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one knows;
  But still the Vine her ancient Ruby yields,
And still a Garden by the Water blows.

VI

And David's Lips are lock't; but in divine
High piping Pehlevi, with "Wine! Wine! Wine!
  Red Wine!"—the Nightingale cries to the Rose
That yellow Cheek of her's to'incarnadine.

VII

Come, fill the Cup, and in the Fire of Spring
The Winter Garment of Repentance fling;
  The Bird of Time has but a little way
To fly—and Lo! the Bird is on the Wing.

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

CHAPTER IV

IN the bracing air of the next morning I could scarcely realize that, after all, this latest Bagdad was only twelve hundred years old and had braved just as tempestuous a career as any one of the many former Bagdads, buried deep under hundreds of feet of mud. Nothing was left of their temples and palaces, although at Barsiffa, three hundred miles away, still stands the tower of Babel credited in Genesis as being the first building after the Deluge. And again the Ctesiphon Arch, as well as the Ishtar Gate, at Babylon are still preserved. These great structures, however, have been reinforced with glazed pottery and bricks or sheet metal that formerly blazed in the eastern sun and thus have been able to withstand the ravages of time. Also Bagdad lay right in the path of every wave of destruction, regardless of the direction whence the disaster came. Egypt's isolated position saved her from a similar fate.

I sauntered out through an ancient gate, a somewhat octagonal brick tower with quaint brick viaducts leading away at right angles. There are no quarries here. All stone used was imported—most everything was constructed of brick. The walls of Belshazzar in Babylon were of brick, cemented with bitumen, which resisted the war engines of Cyrus, son of Cambyses, who, however, diverted the river and marched his armies into the city over the dry bed, freeing Daniel and the Jews—a triumph of thought over force, of brain over brawn.

This brick wall continues on to the tomb of Zobeida, the Arab wife of Haroun al Raschid of the "Arabian

Nights." The Haroun, it is said, was once a Christian, but was later converted to Islam and became a Moslem holy man. The tomb stands out in a veritable city of the dead, where the women go every week to wail. Beautiful, though untidy, neglected and dirty, it bears the marks of time.

I took out my copy of the "Arabian Nights," secured from the government book shop, which maintains the traditions of Bagdad as a centre of learning, and reread my favorite tales.

I visited the Mosque of the Sheik Abdullah Kader, the dome of which is the finest in all Islam. And thence to the Golden Minarets of Kem-Kazemain, only a few short centuries older than its reincarnation in the city hall at Opa Locka, Florida.

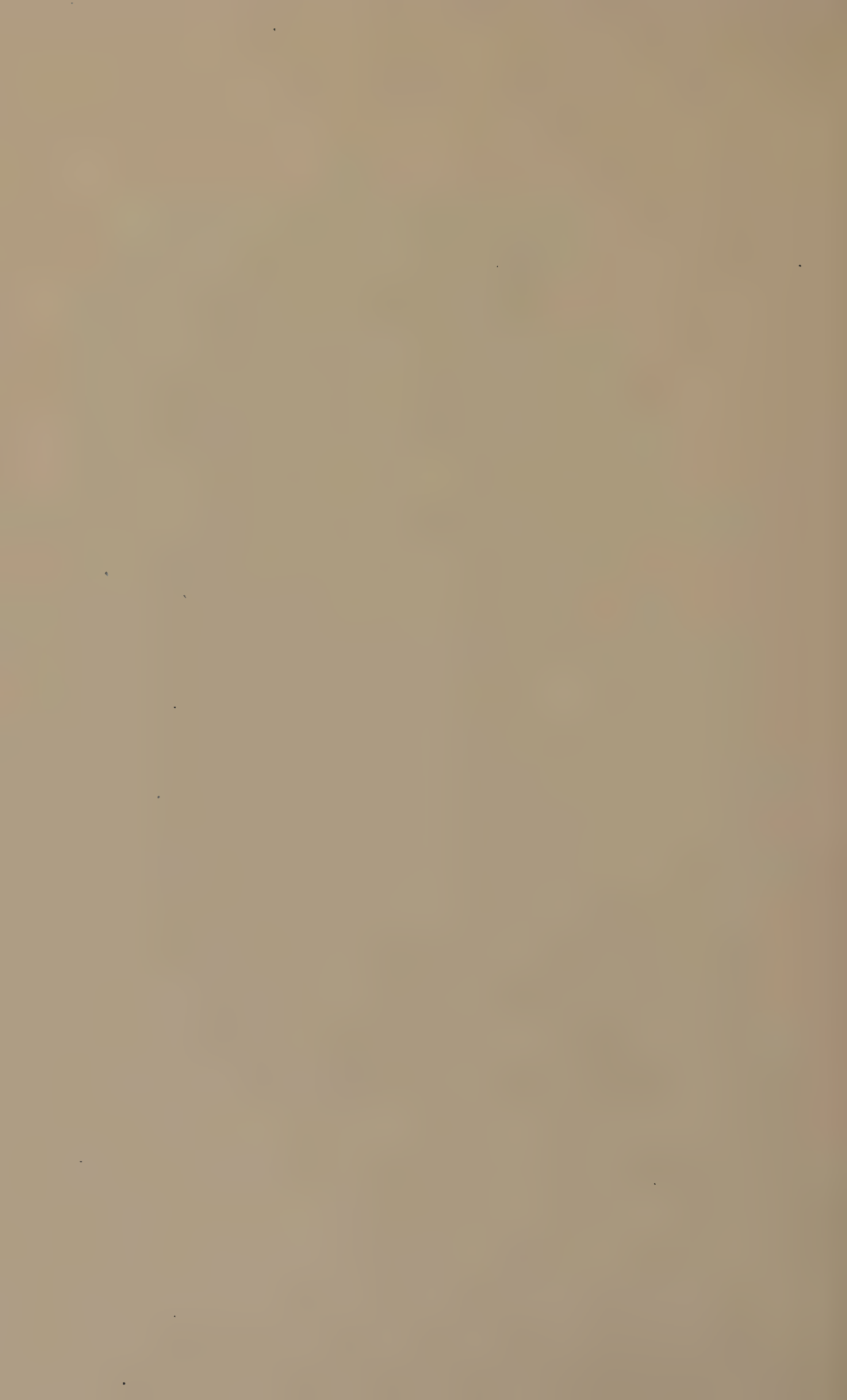
Abu Hanifah, who assisted Mansur in the seventh century in founding the city as we know it—the home of Aladdin and Ali Baba—rests in his tomb, which is doubtless the oldest in all this later Bagdad. He became a Christian convert. Here was another Jerusalem. I was impressed with the fact that all the burial places lay without the city walls—"*Ne Mortem Sepelies in Urbe*"—the precept of the Romans. I had reached the limit of antiquity of the City of the Caliphs as Gray's lines came to me:

> "Each in his narrow cell forever laid,
> The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

With nothing of special interest to attract my attention at this point, I found myself alone with my thoughts. The object of my pilgrimage was to think —yes, to think—and in the atmosphere of the wraiths of the people and the labors of their hands which are no more.



Kotah Bridge and River Front of Bagdad. Over this bridge of boats across the Tigris we bounced and clattered into the age-old city of tombs and temples, minarets and mud, saints and smells—the draggled, disheveled shell of what was once the metropolis of the ancient world



Chastened in spirit, I continued my rambles about the outskirts of the city, accompanied by my guide, Abdul El Hassim. We came upon an old, decrepit building now used as a rendezvous by donkeys and camels. The guide's eyes brightened. In broken English he told me: "This place, just by the house what you don't see yonder, is where Omar Khayyam spent his days in Bagdad." Here were the remains of another flight of giant steps. Ruined walls enclosed all that still remained of the inn which in bygone days may have served as a meeting place for the Bohemians of Bagdad, the Paris of the Orient.

Perhaps, I thought, in this very building the three famous pupils of the equally famous Imam Mowaffak of Naishapur had foregathered, reveling in the philosophic spirit which later gave to the world the "Rubaiyat." Here Omar may have discussed each quatrain with his friends Nizam-ul-Mulk and Ben Sabbath.

The belief general thereabouts at the time was that good fortune would come to all the students of the famous teacher under whom Omar and his friends studied. This belief led to the vow made by the three young men that "On whomsoever this fortune falls, he shall share it equally with the rest and preserve no pre-eminence for himself."

It is related that when Nizam became Vizier, or administrator of affairs of the Sultan, his old "college friends" found him out and promptly called his attention to the sacred vow. One fellow-student was granted his request for money and position, but Omar asked for neither title nor office. His desire was to live in some out-of-the-way corner, and from there to spread the advantages of his science and inventions, among which is said to have been a famous water clock. The

poet's request was granted and he became the combined Seth Thomas and Edison of his time.

Great as was his fame as a scientist during his own age, he is best remembered now as the author of a little book of verse, which lovers of poetry carry about in limp leather binding, and of which at least one quatrain has been read and repeated more often, probably, than any other single verse of ancient song. Do you recognize the lines?

> "A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
> A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
> Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
> Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!"

It was a glorious Sunday morning, and thinking this an appropriate time, I sauntered out to Silversmith Row, where full-bearded merchants in long robes were remelting old silver. These Arabians are a sect who believe in John the Baptist as the Christ. They are very sober and industrious. Their engraving tools, crucibles, and tiny forges are always close at hand. For centuries they have been far-famed for their craftsmanship, but their number is gradually diminishing. They are adepts at carving the precious metals, handing down their skill from father to son.

Even here, with all the dignity of their calling, segregated as they are from the regular marts of trade, is the spirit of bargaining. All unite in practicing their salesmanship instinct on the English or Americans. One stall for a time did a thriving business. The owner put up over his shop a large sign printed in English:

> "One price for all. English be-spoken,
> American understood."

Many patronized him, knowing full well that his "one price" was the top price.

For some time I talked through an interpreter with the head sheik of Bagdad, Naquib, who is intense in his loyalty to Britain. A very large man in every way, he was a prominent candidate for royal honors as King of Iraq, but because of his not having the blood of Mohammed in his veins, King Feisal was chosen to wear the crown and continue the royal line of the prophet.

A venerable looking man, a landed proprietor and well educated, when I saw him he remarked to me, with a smile in his eyes:

"After all, Naquib would rather be a sheik than king."

His home is a palace even equal in splendor to that of King Feisal, and his sway over the tribes he controls is not disputed even by the most powerful kings or potentates.

Though already more than three score and ten years, he still retained the vigor of his intellect, if not of his strength. His eyes fairly sparkled with the fire of youth as he told me of his country and his people:

"You of the Western world say we are a backward people," he declared. "But the time is coming when you will drift toward Arabic civilization—and the time is not far distant. This movement of your ideals is inevitable—Allah has decreed it," he motioned as he turned and gazed toward Mecca.

"Do not forget that we gave you much of what you now consider as Western creations," he asserted with a gesture, throwing his robe back. "We gave you your arithmetic, without which it would be impossible to carry on the vast commercial enterprises for which you are noted. We gave you your higher mathematics, your algebra. We were the first to compute for the

unknown with x-y, and we have seen our visions fulfilled even in the mathematics that has translated the stars into an open book. Few would have known the world was round without astronomy. Your mariners who circumnavigate the globe could not have sailed the high seas without the guidance of our calculation method originated ages before Columbus discovered America."

He declared that his people have heard much of America since the war. They think of it as a new nation, a new race which has taken up the old Arabic ideals and is drifting away from the civilization of Europe. They credit us with preserving for them the philosophy of Aristotle when Europe had forgotten it.

Speaking of the strange intermingling of religions, here among the Mohammedans, Christians, and Jews live a sect of devil-worshipers, with their curious, yet cunning theology. They pray to the devil because they consider that God is good and will take care of them without the necessity of their supplicating His benevolence in their prayers. They worship the devil, on the other hand, because they believe that they can thus appease his malevolence and bring the "fallen angel," as they consider him, back to heaven.

The one sensitive point of the Oriental is his faith. Religion is a passion with the Mohammedans. It is a subject of thought almost every hour. Allah has already taken care of everything. Theirs is the duty of obedience wherever that may lead. Fanatics lash themselves with chains, cut their faces, and go into all sorts of frenzies on the religious holidays in their desire to secure the good will of "Him who watches from above." Mohammedans seldom cared for their sick or their weak. When ill with the plague, they bow to

the will of Allah. Refusing all medical assistance, they await the end, bemoaning that they could not have died in battle and gone to heaven direct. It remained for the Christ of Bethlehem to bring to the world a new religious ideal. In Bagdad, as elsewhere, I am afraid many so-called Christian sects fall far short from following the Golden Rule of the lowly Nazarene.



CHAPTER V

Crossing the Syrian Desert marking the Great Divide of Civilization

VIII

And look—a thousand Blossoms with the Day
Woke—and a thousand scatter'd into Clay:
  And this first Summer Month that brings the Rose
Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobád away.

IX

But come with old Khayyám, and leave the Lot
Of Kaikobád and Kaikhosrú forgot:
  Let Rustum lay about him as he will,
Or Hátim Tai cry Supper—heed them not.

X

With me along some Strip of Herbage strown
That just divides the desert from the sown,
  Where name of Slave and Sultán scarce is known,
And pity Sultán Máhmúd on his Throne.

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

CHAPTER V

UPON the summit of Time's great Divide, it seemed as if from the upper floor of the ancient Syrian desert I was looking over into the promised golden era when intermingled civilizations were to meet on the field of the Cloth of Gold. Speeding six hundred miles across the desert sands, sometimes doing sixty miles an hour, was joy-riding transcendent. True, there were volleys of dust; we rode the long hours through it without stopping and saw nothing but miles and miles of sand—just sand—only sand and sand again. Jeff squinted his eyes and gazed at the horizon. "Might have a sand storm today," he said. This statement made us nervous, because we had already heard something of those who had perished in sand storms in the desert.

I was leaving Iraq that day. Up to this time I had occupied the entire stage as the lone American, but now I was destined soon to share it with two others. While dining, I noticed a man and woman who were eating beans. I listened and heard that familiar soft, nasal twang in their speech. "Americans," I said to myself. "Bostonians, too." I promptly presented myself at their table and met Mr. and Mrs. Robert Farrington, of Boston, who had just arrived from India by way of Basra. They told me of their travels, but I had the glory of heroically telling them all about my trip across the desert.

When Jeff Parsons, our chauffeur, met them, he said:

"Nothing seems to keep these Yankees away. I am sure that I have seen more folks from Boston seeking

for antiquities in these parts than from any other city in the United States. Is Boston a museum?"

It made us all feel grateful that the Kaiser's dream of "Berlin to Bagdad" had been supplanted by the reality of "Boston to Bagdad." I was happy to think that on the return trip I could hear the peculiar "r's" and the—to me—beautiful accent of dear old New England, for I was now a real desert guide.

As we took our leave of the city, Bagdad was in holiday array. The narrow streets were bright with bunting. There were flags across the buildings, hanging from the roofs and balconies, and in the stores of Iraq—flags everywhere. The Crown Prince Ghazi was to arrive that day.

Jeff was lashing the baggage on the running board when a parade passed through the crooked, winding thoroughfare. A trim company of Boy Scouts, with uniforms and staffs, indicative of what England has done for the country, was one of the features. The colorful spectacle made one feel that the pomp and glory of the great processions of the court of Belshazzar might some day be revived.

It was difficult to move on through this demonstration of native welcome to the heir apparent that had assumed the proportions of a New York police parade, but Jeff was obdurate—he carries the mail. In the glare of the hot sun, which beat mercilessly down upon us, we dashed again for the desert. Just outside the city a great flock of black-tipped storks landed before us. Jeff whispered, "They are perhaps on their way from Strasburg. They usually appear when I have a bridal couple for passengers," he remarked, looking back at the passengers. He lost his cigarette when he laughed at his own joke.

This time the long desert trail didn't seem so long or the bumps so hard. It was almost like a swift airplane flight; in fact, we were following the white airplane furrow.

Across the smaller desert, in the town of Fellujah, where we crossed the Euphrates on a pontoon bridge, we met the retinue of the Crown Prince in all its royal splendor. The people who followed his car were grave and gave no boisterous demonstration of their feelings. They looked on silently and salaamed to us, thinking we were of the royal party.

The heir to the throne of Iraq was a lad of about fourteen years, whom the people call Amur Ghazi. Attired in white, he wore on his turban the magic green from the Holy City, as he was just returning from Mecca. Inside his limousine, adorned with the new flag of his nation, he sat smiling happily between two aides. He did not seem to understand what it was all about, but he was, nevertheless, creditably playing the part of a Prince of Wales en route.

At Ramadi it was necessary to show our passports, then on we hurried to the "Mud Patch"—the clay filling of an ancient volcanic crater surrounded by bitumen pools with black scum floating on brackish waters.

As night fell and we rolled along over the desert, the headlights of the automobile shooting three hundred feet ahead, I could fancy that on either side there were towering trees, palaces and buildings. It did not seem that we were alone on the extensive plains of sand. In my mind there were dreams of Bagdad that had not been realized, but with heavy eyes now and then opening on the shaft of light before me, I could fancy the palaces of the fairy tales in all the glory of ancient days,

when the City of Caliphs was considered the apex of civilization. The old stories of the "Arabian Nights" were more vivid in these lonely imaginings on the return across the desert than they were when, a short while ago, I gazed upon the actual scenes.

Despite all the unpoetic, drab pictures I have drawn, if you, too, still cherish fond memories of "Arabian Nights," whatever I have said, I feel sure, will only serve to enhance your curiosity and determination to some day see Bagdad as I have seen it. Already, perhaps, the charm will react upon you as it did me.

As for me—I have been to Bagdad. That's more than Doug Fairbanks could say at that time.

Every hour of the day, every hour of the night had its mood. Imagination is stirred in the endless sea of sand, for there was nothing in sight—but sand. We will begin with the hour of 6 p. m., when the Oriental day begins. With the appearance of the first star in the heavens, yesterday became today. The stars seemed to come thick and fast that night and seemed to hang very low. The horizon was filled with bright lights like clusters of lurid giant grapes. It was six o'clock according to our watches, but the beginning of the Moslem day varies with the seasons. In the light, purple dusk the moon heralded the coming night.

On chugged the motor car—the scenery monotonously whirring by and the headlights shining out ahead in a lane of light. We felt as though we were riding on a long stretch of smooth boulevard just outside Paris or New York. On either side I seemed to see street lamps, trees and mansions, with here and there a park. Crossing a sea of sand, covering the distance from New York to Cleveland, we swept on without being "put off at Buffalo." . . . .

All seemed cool and quiet at the magic hour of seven. Flashes of lightning played about the horizon like great footlights for this scene in the desert at night. Not a cloud in the sky, but the lurid light indicated that the call bell had been sounded and the curtain of night was to fall. The sands suggested a magic hour-glass towering far into the heavens, marking with the falling grains the passing of centuries.

At eight o'clock the stars seemed just a little bit closer. How we sped along! It was a motorist's paradise—there were no goggled traffic goblins to "get you" and no intersecting streets to feel for the shadows of another car. The desert was as free as the air we breathed, so Jeff stepped on the gas and winked his eye as he glanced at the speedometer. The British officers in the rear bobbed up and down like tin cans in an empty wagon box, and hit the roof now and then as we struck a waddy (the rocks of a stream flowing down through the crust) for it was like skimming along on thin ice. At other times we had to wriggle through the drifts, as if "off the road" on Cape Cod.

The breeze created by the rushing car refreshed us after the heat of the day. Everybody began to cheer and sing. The musical urge came as it does to all travelers in a lonely ride. When out boating, water ballads are sung—"Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep" or "Sailing"; in winter time it is "Jingle Bells," "Seeing Nellie Home"; crossing the desert the refrain of an old love ballad of a generation ago came to me: "Until the sands of the desert grow cold, and their infinite numbers are told." There suddenly flashed in my mind that this was another case where fact and theory were in sharp conflict, for these sands of the desert not only grow cold, but very cold, every twenty-four hours.

At nine o'clock, the curfew hour, I seemed to hear bells tolling in the distance. Our throats felt parched; we took another drink from the tube, instead of from a glass, in order not to waste water. I felt a queer sensation in my stomach. My mind turned to food. "When are we going to eat?" I whispered. Jeff gazed at his compass, made a bee-line across the trackless, roadless sands and struck a spot where he had stopped before. A camp fire was made under the lea of a little mound which we built up with sand. The old oil cans, which shone out like silver stars along the route at night, served as a protection for this flickering camp fire in the heart of the Syrian desert. A little gasoline, a little dry camel grass and some old boxes made the fire. We sat around and had "chow." Our simple meal consisted only of bully beef, chicken sandwiches and pickles. And how good the hot tea tasted made in the old black kettle propped up on a can. It leaked precious water, but Jeff repaired it on the lee side. There was a flavor of gasoline, but we enjoyed it, while the British officers—dashing, good-natured fellows—chaffed us about Yankees from Boston not wasting precious tea. When we had finished we sat back, smoked, and began star gazing, but Jeff urged making an early start. After examining his tires, he took the wheel and we started off again.

At ten o'clock the engines were warming up for a hot stretch. Those in the back seat soon began to yawn, and we were—most of us—sleeping sitting up. Now and then we opened our eyes and wondered where we were, as we scented the bitumen pools with their sulphuric smell. Someone suggested we were enjoying a foretaste of the atmosphere of the hereafter, but no one laughed at the old joke. At times it seemed as if

we were traveling in circles, yet we were driving straight ahead as an arrow flies.

Eleven o'clock and all was well! Jeff scented a new trail and was stepping on the gas for all she was worth. He gave her extra juice and we could feel her snorting away as if grateful for the increased allowance. The cloud of dust trailing behind us would have made an onlooker think the Twentieth Century train was passing. In fact, we were rushing on at a twentieth-century pace.

At one rough stretch we ran into a thousand head of camels lying in the sand. When the animals got up they looked like rocking horses kicking out behind them. They are queer, knock-kneed animals, whose legs, nevertheless, never seem to knock when under way. They follow one another in single file, each one using the footprints of the one preceding. The camels are in charge of "camel boy" sheiks, who move them about for pasturage like great herds of cattle on the plains. How camels ever live on the tough grass scattered over the desert, and exist for days without water, no one knows. They have storage tank stomachs and an exhaustless cud to chew—and the flavor lasts.

Here and there are old wells where caravans have encamped for ages past. There were dents and furrows in the sands, marking the spaces over which hordes of camels had rolled and disported themselves in their native habitat.

Came the witching hour of twelve! Then it seemed as if the stars met in the zenith and passing, bowed gracefully to each other the signs of the zodiac. There were new visions and sky landscapes in the heavens. No wonder the Egyptians and the Chaldeans delved deep into astronomy and dabbled in astrology. Now

I can understand why hermits seek the solitudes, why God brought the people of Israel into the desert to discipline them. He was close to them there, for there was no place to hide from His all-seeing eye. There are no mountain peaks, hills, crevices, rivers or valleys to distract from His glory above. There humanity seems so close to Divinity that you could imagine in the eloquent silence of the desert the whisper of God.

Broadcasting our blankets on the ground, we longed for just a few minutes' stretch and rest. While my



fellow-voyagers had a "nip of a nap," as Jeff called it, I lay with face upturned to the skies, while strange little white-winged insects clustered around. I felt I could almost hear the flutter of moth wings as the twinkling stars were telling me bedtime stories.

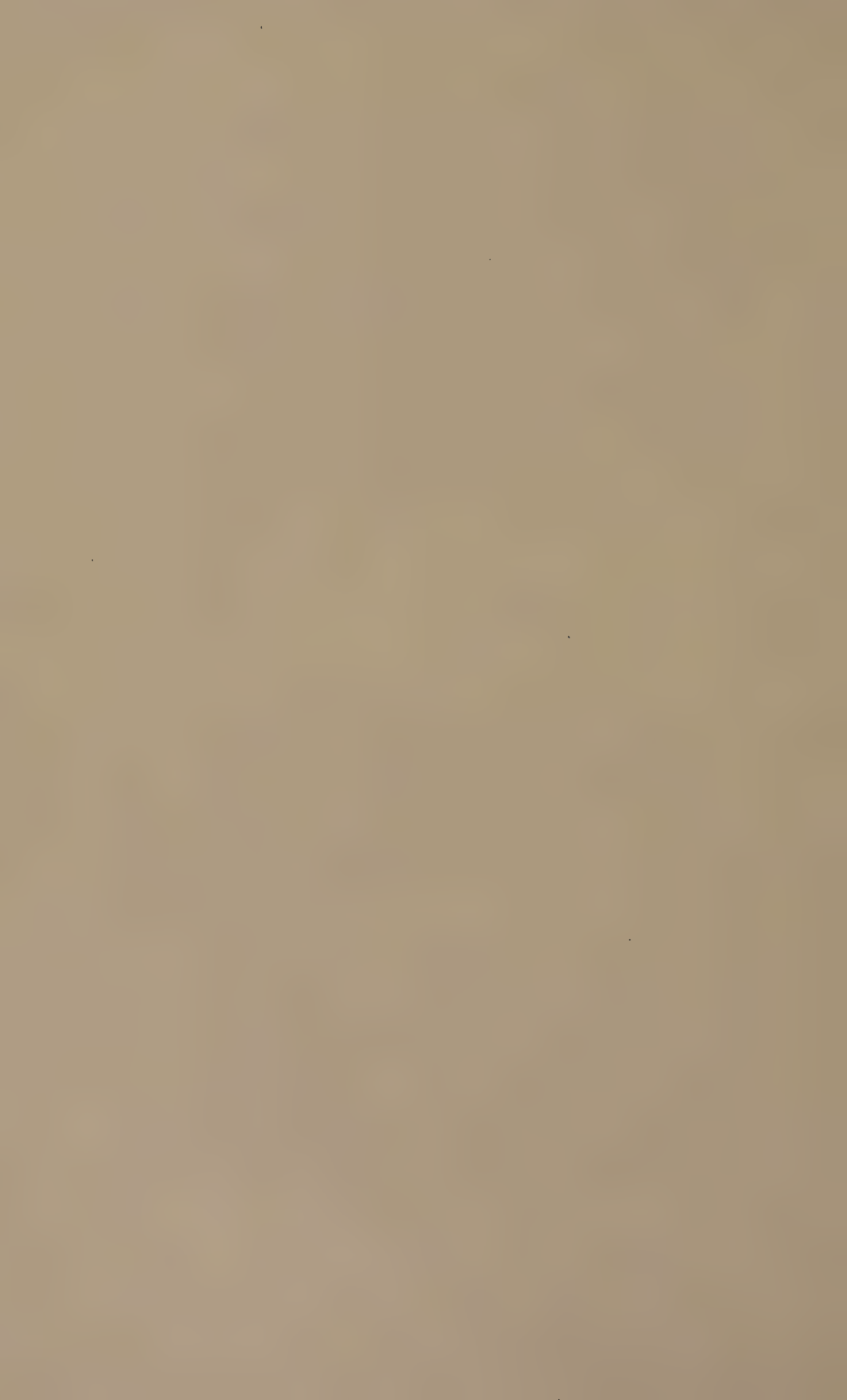
Time counted, and so we were off again in the wee small hours. At one o'clock it was growing chilly. In the early morning the weather is freezing in the desert, and it is easy to understand why you must carry blankets. Even snow and ice is not unknown in this waste land that is torridly hot by day. Here and there were little cave dug-outs where the camel men would sequester during the heat of noon and



The Tomb of Zobeida, wife of Haroun-el-Raschid, the Arab lady who gave to the world the wondrous tales in the "Thousand and One Nights"—the Edna Ferber of the ancient world



The roof of the American Consulate at Bagdad. My favorite spot—an oasis of quiet in a city of hubbub, where the ear of the stranger is assailed by a multitude of discordant sounds



sleep at night. In the witchery of the moonlight we could still see those tin cans strewn along the way that serve as guide posts for the automobile convoys. It was in this desert that a battle was fought during the World War that halted a Moslem uprising and upheaval in the East. With a quick flank movement the British army had come over from India and made a campaign through these parts, about which not much has been heard or written, but which resulted in restoring the banner of the cross to the sacred soil of Palestine.

At two o'clock my legs began to stiffen. It seemed as if all the rheumatic pains in the world began to assert themselves. There was no way of relieving the ache, and we had nothing to do but alternately nap and wake up and recross our legs. In the meantime the motors were sailing on and on through the flying dust! The cars of the convoy had to keep in touch with the "flagship." This they did by signalling —turning about every so often and communicating with headlights "off" and "on." One flash of the powerful lights gave the message "All right, go ahead." Two flashes, "trouble." Then "all's well" they answer, and on we sailed into the greenish blue night. The convoy was in charge of Jeff, and he certainly kept a close watch over the flock of seven automobiles, which were most of the time out of sight of each other. There were no collisions.

* * *

When the hands of my watch stood at three o'clock, came the "false dawn." It seemed as though there was a light breaking through the horizon. That phenomenon of false dawn was like the day-time mirage which lures the wayfarer of the desert waste to travel

on to destruction. Then came a chill feeling of awe that in the cold gray mist reminded one of death. From three to four o'clock are counted the trying dark moments in the all-night vigil—the leaden minutes of the twenty-four.

At four o'clock came the first evidence of the real dawn. The appearance of that hope-inspiring morning star that shone so brightly seemed to drive away the other planets. We lost what desire we had for rest in the anticipation of the daylight of another day. The morning star outshines the others, and is the unerring guide of the mariner in the morning watch.

Jeff sang out, "The hour is five!" There was a streak of the living red of the real dawn. The shiver of the morning still remained, but there was now a visible promise of the warm sunshine of another day.

At six o'clock, as we crashed over the bed of a dry river of rocks and through a small canyon, we ran into a gazelle, the little deer of the desert. Looking into the large, luminous eyes of that dying creature, I understood why human eyes can have no higher tribute paid to them than to be likened unto the soft, expressive eyes of the gazelle. This little deer of the desert had evidently been crippled by hunters and was playing about like a fawn in the early morning as we swiftly approached. We were upon him before he was aware of our proximity—and then it was too late. We struck and tossed him several feet. When Jeff had brought the car to a stop and stood over the little animal, it looked at us with a light in its eyes that will ever haunt me. Six o'clock seemed to be a time for casualties. Not much farther on we ran into a porcupine and laid it out, happily without harm to the tires. When I was a boy, I remember one afternoon spent in extracting

porcupine quills from my pet dog. I was glad Jeff did not ask me to operate on the quill-pricked tires.

Seven o'clock brought the reality of bacon and breakfast time. I sat on the running board with a steaming tin can full of coffee in one hand and a tin plate containing canned sausages in the other. A Persian melon that looked like a pumpkin was offered to the lone American who, they thought, might insist on having fruit for breakfast. It was a grill-room feast far away from the Waldorf. We huddled close to the cheerful fire, loathe to leave. But Jeff had his time schedule to follow and insisted that we must "jump in and click the doors." He was the sheik in supreme command of the "sailing caravan"—as the natives called it—which required grit and "sand" to annihilate distance over the trackless waste.

At eight o'clock the sun was rising in regal splendor, warming up the cold sands and bidding defiance to the waning light of the crescent moon. The heat began to grow more intense. Far in the distance were mirages—the strange phenomena of prairie lands. Rivers and groves of trees were clearly and definitely visioned in the distance. One of the party in the back seat got excited and implored Jeff not to go so fast. "You are sure to run into that lake and drown us all." One withering glance from Jeff was enough to check any more driving from the rear seat.

By nine o'clock the bulb in the thermometer under the tonneau roof was climbing higher. We were just a little more tired. If we could only stop for a wee wink, but Jeff was adamant—the engine must make the distance in so many revolutions. There was a speck in the distance. It grew larger and larger, like a ship coming up on the horizon. At last we made out a

motor caravan coming from the opposite direction. When the dust-covered flotillas of motor cars meet, brakes are set for a hello! The brief pause gave us a chance to stretch our legs in a stroll on the "sandy beach."

One young man with a camera came over and handed me his card—like a wide-awake American traveling man. It was C. W. C. Davis.

"We're like ships that pass in the night. I want a picture of the only fat man I have ever seen in the desert."

He laughed as we shook hands. "Do you want to take my picture?" I guilelessly asked.

He snapped us in a second. We said "hail" and "farewell" in ten minutes, but in that time an acquaintance crystallized. There were only two handclasps and one good look into each other's eyes—and now we call each other "friends." He was returning from Portsmouth, England, to service in the East. Our letters now have the ring of old-time acquaintance, which was begun in the snap of a camera shutter ne'er forgot.

It scarcely seemed as if we had stopped when Jeff looked at his watch. "Must push on," he said, and that meant "go."

"Ten o'clock," my neighbor in the rear chanted in a short while. The seats were getting harder and now we understood why we were advised to bring air cushions as well as blankets for a trip across the desert. Unable to find a new place for my legs, my feet seemed always in the way, so I hung them out over the door, propped up like a gout patient.

At eleven o'clock old Sol was working full time. The heat was coming down with almost equatorial



Dam across the Nile at Assuan, the Soudan



directness. Pitilessly he continued to shoot his rays. While the canopy was impregnable, the "burning sands" made me long for a rope and camel's milk. Amid hot winds the motor car sped along like a thing alive and I put on my Shrine "fez" and said "Islam" quick. Memories of the "hot times" at Mecca Temple ceremonial in New York were cool and refreshing in comparison.

To rest my weary anatomy, I changed cars at this junction, seating myself beside Jerry Nairn, one of the Nairn brothers, who came to Palestine from Australia. They blazed the first transport trail and made the desert safe for a democracy. A treaty with the sheiks roving the land made it unnecessary to go armed and possible to proceed unharmed in a district where many were "held up" for a round ransom before the Nairn boys and the Union Jack appeared upon the scene. The Nairn Transport Company is the result of the Nairn Brothers pioneer days in the Orient, following their service in the war.

Then came the blow-out. Jeff remarked to me, "Well, you're a real mascot!" It went off like a 75-centimeter gun. The barrage that followed seemed to blow out everything in the horizon of the tire circle. Jeff swore soothingly and stripped for action, leaving on his abbreviated aviator pantalets.

During the interval one of the passengers brought out a tiny "Peter Pan" phonograph. The wailing minor refrain of "What'll We Do" rang out on the desert air. How Irving Berlin would have enjoyed this far-away cry of his popular song served as canned music in the desert! Out in the heat of the sun there was a million of the stickiest and most sociable flies in creation buzzing around. They pestered with more

familiarity than mosquitoes at a Sunday-school picnic in Jersey. It seemed as if it took hours to put on that new wheel, though in reality it was less than twenty minutes. When we were beginning to enjoy the music Jeff interrupted, "This is no time for music," and he blew his Gabriel horn, after signalling "all right" to the other wanderers of the convoy following behind.

Twelve o'clock high noon—and high temperature. I watched the dial of my timepiece, expecting every second to hear the staccato report of another exploding tire as a call to lunch, but I was disappointed. Silence brooded like a "beefsteak" spirit over midday's hungry hour. Jeff said this was a "no stop" mail express, and the request to eat seemed to only resound hot air echoes from afar.

In the distance was the mound marking the boundary between Iraq and Syria. It appeared not far away, but Jerry said it was many, many miles away off on the direct trail to Aleppo. For centuries past the patient, slow-moving camels have trod this path on the way to the countries that lie beyond, where a few days of time was never counted much in the span of life.

At one o'clock came a slight waning of the sun's heat. There was not a factory whistle—not a sound of any kind to call from refreshment to labor and break the monotony—we just bumped onward and the springs seemed to get tired.

At two o'clock Jeff stopped short, rubbed his stomach and said, "Let's have a dish of tea." Those were welcome words! It was rather early for our lunch, but we were trying to consolidate meal hours in order to save time. In a few minutes we sat down to another

cup of steaming tea and a bit of biscuit, sandwiches with tomatoes—and chicken. We finished off with some of the desert's delicious tiny apples. Oriental apples never grow large or red. They are small and green, full of juice that quenches the thirst. I think I chewed those apples longer than camels usually chew their cuds. Then, American fashion, I tried chewing gum to allay thirst.

Here and there we came upon the wreck of an automobile stripped of all parts, or the skeleton of a camel or donkey—gruesome reminders of the casualties of the desert. The white air furrow lines we followed were provided for the use of aviators, who, in following the lines, are able to give location in event of a crash in the desert. Otherwise rescuers would have to search over hundreds of square miles of desert land.

I gulped some more water. H_2O is precious in the desert. At some airport stations the same water used in shaving is utilized to help out the bath supply, and in some cases is again filtered in stone bottles and used for drinking purposes.

* * *

Something of modernism has crept in even here. At the air post station, aviators with helmets and abbreviated khaki trousers were "tuning up" their engines and getting their machines ready for a flight over the desert, as casually as if they were planning a Sunday excursion to Atlantic City.

Nearby in the desert was an Arab graveyard from whence came a gruesome nerve-racking sound of lamentation. There the women of that little place in the desert had gone to spend the afternoon wailing for their dead—just as the faithful do in Jerusalem.

At four o'clock we petitioned Jeff for a rest and terrapin soup, but there was nothing doing. He claimed we were a little behind our schedule. Four is the restless hour, when you begin to think of dinner, and the English always put the tea-kettle on to boil.

"Five o'clock," Jeff sang out. It seemed impossible. It seemed as though we had spent ages in the desert, and yet it was only twenty hours since we had started.

Six o'clock and I began to lose count. We were on the home stretch, but there was no stretching of legs. For more than a day we had been sitting in a cramped position as the machines cut off miles and miles of decimated space according to the map, but it seemed as if we would never reach Damascus. Refreshing it was to just feel a large area of dry farming land, watered only once a year by rain, fortified by irrigation ditches, and see the Lebanon Mountains in the far distance.

The children of Israel are said to have spent forty years in the desert. How they existed I don't know, but it will be observed that ever since there has never been a rush for homesteads on these parched reservations.

Humans seem to come closer to the all-seeing eyes of Jehovah out in the open of the desert. These endless seas of sand have a strange lure—a fascination—a something that cannot be explained, possessing even the charm of a paradise in some ways in meeting the relentless craving for change.

In the far distance were the olive trees which guided us along the river, where we met groups of donkeys and camel caravans on their way "somewhere across the desert." They were making an early evening

start, bent on doing as much traveling during the cool of the night as possible.

Far on the rim of the horizon was the skyline of Damascus, the oldest inhabited city in the world. With its river of living waters, its minarets and turreted towers and lofty Mt. Hermon in the distance, it is renowned as the one great oasis city of the world. No wonder they call it the "Gateway to Paradise." What a haven it seemed to us as we strained our eyes to make out every detail of the dark spots. Thrilled with expectation as the automobile chugged toward Damascus, an explosion broke the silence. Jeff looked out over the side and swore out: "Blow out, I'm blowed." Off came an extra spare in the rear. The delay allowed the other cars to catch up with and pass us, and we had to bite their dust for a while. But Jeff knew more about this section of the country than the other drivers, and old "49" was soon in the lead again.

He veered about to the right. Then the seven machines began to scatter playfully and disport themselves over the wide flat area as we made the home stretch to Damascus.

The stars began to twinkle for another glorious night on the desert as if challenging the tiny electric bulbs shedding their radiance upon old Damascus where the Apostle Paul "saw the light." The Arab dance halls were going full blast, with the familiar "Hoochy Koochy" arias of the jazz from the Streets of Cairo. Pushing through the teeming mass of people scurrying along in the dark shadows of the buildings, Jeff dashed up to the door of the old hotel with a hearty hello! honk! honk! How good it seemed to even climb three flights to the entrance of that hotel, Grand Victoria—

a haven of rest—and find there a clean room and plenty of water awaiting the dusty pilgrim.

Here we were at last in Damascus on the river Barades after thirty eventful hours, revealing human nature baring its soul to God, realizing how puny is finite man without the Infinite; how utterly dependent he is on the God of all Nature and human nature. Without water, without air, without the mercies provided by the Creator of earth and heaven, human lives would soon ebb away in the desert sands of time, symbolized in the waste of the desert we had crossed.

We are now on the borders of the Holy Land.

CHAPTER VI

In Damascus, the Oldest Continuously Inhabited City in the World

XI

Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou
  Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
And Wilderness is Paradise enow.

XII

"How sweet is mortal Sovranty!"—think some:
Others—"How blest the Paradise to come!"
  Ah, take the Cash in hand and waive the Rest;
Oh, the brave Music of a *distant* Drum!

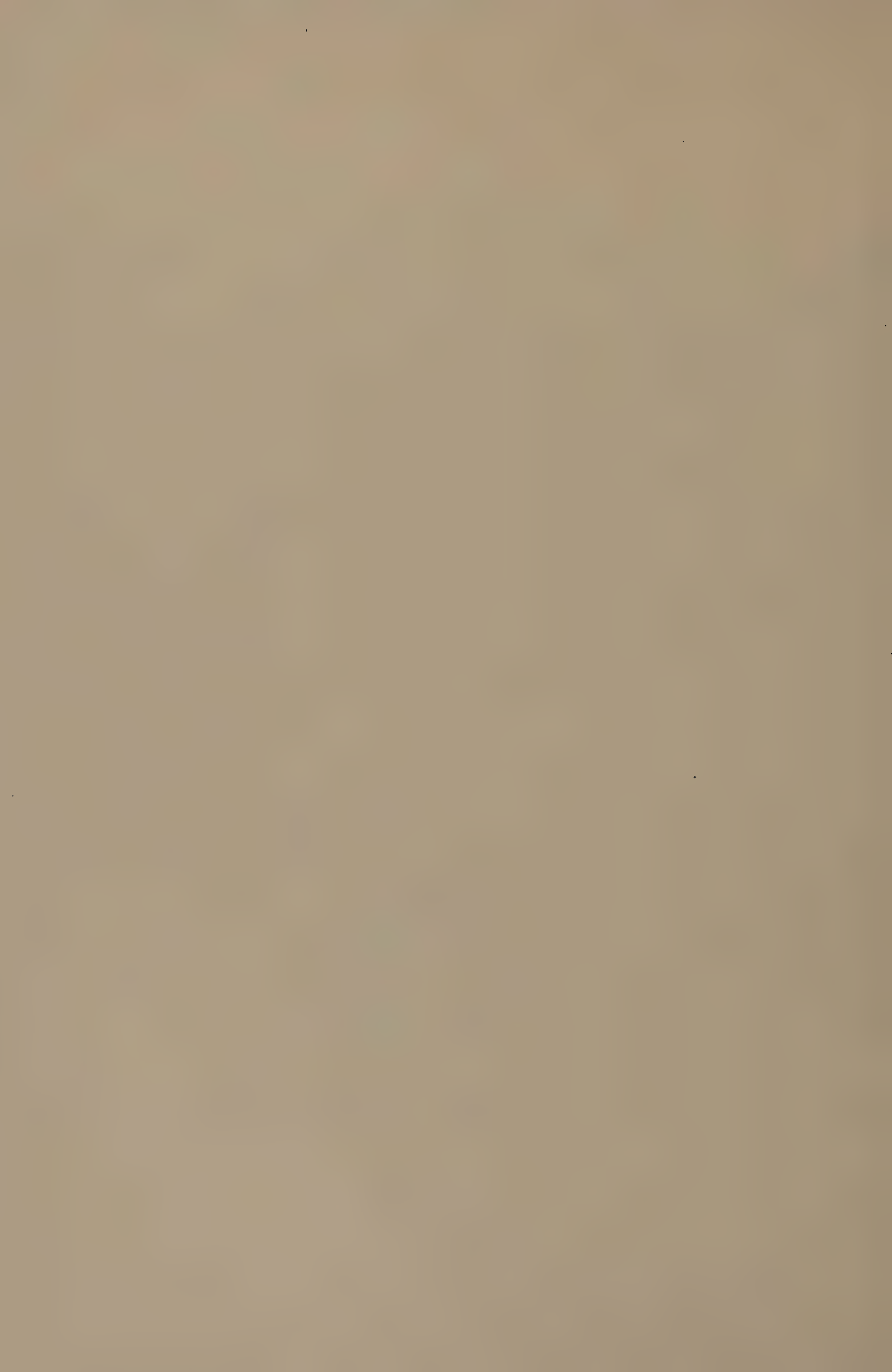
XIII

Look to the Rose that blows about us—"Lo,
Laughing," she says, "into the World I blow:
  At once the silken Tassel of my Purse
Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw."

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*



Ruins of the House of Martha, Mary and Lazarus, in Bethany. Here dwelt Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead, with his sisters Martha and Mary; and here they made Him a supper which Martha served while Lazarus sat at the table with the Saviour. "Then took Mary a pound of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment"



CHAPTER VI

IN the dramatic appeal of Damascus as to the fine blades and scimitars which figure conspicuously in the bloody stories of the "Arabian Nights," we began to feel "as keen as Damascus steel" in lively anticipation. We first "saw the light on the way to Damascus," in the lure of an oriental night. The last rays of the descending sun had gleamed on the domes of the seventy-odd mosques of the ancient metropolis. Night had fallen when we passed through the ancient walls over which the Apostle Paul escaped. The road skirted the River Barades, and the gay old stream was rippling merrily along, singing the same old song it sang in Solomon's time. On the banks were merry-makers and cozy latticed bird-cages in nooks where merry-makers gathered.

In America, cities boast of their tremendous population indicated in the Arabic numerals—figures that are the one universal and unchanging medium of calculation for all races and all men of today, and point for verification to the latest census reports. They speak proudly of their public buildings, the new $1,000,000 city hall, the $100,000,000 subways, $2,000,-000 churches and the many storeyed skyscrapers. Every city boasts of its enormous growth and advance in land value indicative of real estate promotions—the dollar mark is the basic measure of its developments. But Damascus presents a story of land development which is not rivaled anywhere—the oldest active real estate traders in the world, and they are still at it, with new subdivisions and gay "plots" of "lots" that are

sure to advance in price, "and if"—the comment of the real estate salesman—the Aviation Station or flying field is located thereabouts.

To refresh my knowledge of biblical lore I first visited "the Street called Straight," and soon felt right at home. To a Bostonian, accustomed to crooked streets, it was like rounding the curves of Cornhill. This is the "main street" of Damascus as far as the guide books are concerned, because it is a thoroughfare mentioned in Holy Writ and has been on the blue prints since Abraham's time.

Near the wide square in the center of the city was an Arab dance hall in which French soldiers and Syrian "cake eaters" were making a night of it. Although Damascus may lack the brilliant light of gay Paris or Luna Park, there were lively doings in the streets that night. The public letter writers were busy; they sat up late into the night scrawling missives for customers while seated in their "offices" on the pavements. Here they are ready, night and day, to handle the correspondence of any and all who pass that way. They keep no files, and a letter burning with love and passion may succeed a prosaic "yours of the 15th at hand," with poetic appeal "why has not your debt of honor been graciously paid?" One of the scribes wrote a letter for me in Arabic, which I dictated in English—a sort of soliloquy—and translated it read like an outburst of the mad Dane in "Hamlet."

A brigade of bootblacks were waiting at the entrance to the Grand Victoria Hotel. Outfitted with polishes, brushes, bottles and preparations that looked like a traveling apothecary shop, all kinds of polishing, "fancy and plain," was vigorously solicited—"open all night."

Every nook and corner of the lobby was filled with writing desks. And I understood why the scribes of antiquity used to linger around Damascus. A number of Syrians who had been to America spoke to me in accented New Yorkese: "I had woid from Hoboken, Joisey, that my brother was in Paterson." These people had been proud of their residence in the United States, and told me of all the different cities in which they had lived or visited, and it sounded like an Erie time-table.

With a newly-recruited guide, in the morning I sallied forth into the crooked streets, but found little to absorb attention. There were the same shops, the same beggars, the same unpleasant odors with which all oriental cities abound. He took me to a livestock market where they were selling the thinnest all-rib cows I have ever seen. Now I can appreciate the Chicago packers' product. Then, as a pleasant diversion, I visited a snake store. This reptile, like the Rod of Aaron, is still the symbol of all that is treacherous and bad in the eyes of the Moslem. Yet these pests are still the adoration of the women in the Orient, as they were in the days of Cleopatra. The outline of serpents are carved in the ornaments the women wear —snake bracelets, snake earrings, snake anklets, and snake rings, seen on every hand. There seems to be some sort of subtle charm in these venomous crawling things of earth for adornment.

A young chap, a graduate from the American University at Beirut, with whom I stopped to talk under the windows of an old-fashioned romantic-looking balcony—the last reminder of the harem—supplemented my thoughts on snakes in this creepy comment:

"Our people have been fighting with snakes and

other reptiles for so long that they may have taken on some of the characteristics of the hated creatures, which you of the West do not understand."

* * *

In the light of the morning, I looked out upon the River Barades, which had furnished the fairy-land picture of the night before. The witchery of the night in the East becomes a continual disappointment in the reality of daylight. I now gazed upon a squalid, almost stagnant stream—the bottom of the river bed was rank with filth, cans, and garbage carried along with the freshets for many miles. The rich, tropical foliage that had seemed so fantastically beautiful during the evening was nothing more than a garbage heap whose outlines had been softened into tropical luxuriance under the spell of the moonlight.

In front of the hotel another large convoy of the Nairn Transport Company was preparing for the scheduled weekly dash across the desert. It was a case of hustle and bustle. Passengers were rushing about from one motor to the other, making sure that none of their baggage or boxes were overlooked; drivers were lashing freight on the running boards and "honking" at the inquisitive natives as they crowded about the cars, much as the American Indians used to do in the old stage coach days of Buffalo Bill, or when the first motor rumbled into town. With a flourish of Gabriel auto horns that startled many of the onlookers, the cars whirled off through the dust on the first lap of their desert trip, after dodging camels and donkeys on the way down through the Bazaars.

The suggestion that Damascus bears to what Mohammed declared was a paradise on earth is that it is



Eastbound and Westbound passenger caravans pause when meeting on the long desert highway to exchange greetings. An opportunity such as this offered to the weary travellers to descend from the the autos and stretch their legs is gratefully welcomed

Having their "pictures took" on the Syrian Desert. The amplitudinous party clad with a "nightie" in the left foreground is the Editor of the "National Magazine." Next to him stands Jerry Nairn of the Nairn Transport Company, which operates the "Overland Desert Mail." The man at the right is the redoubtable Jeff Parsons, dare-devil driver of the Cadillac auto in which Mr. Chapple and his party crossed the desert. Four English Army officers are "in the rear"



well watered and has an energizing climate. The rivers Pharpar and Abana of scriptural renown follow their course to the city and provide for an abundance of fountains, making Damascus a veritable geyser city, nurturing probably the oldest cultivated soil in the world, furnishing sustenance for human beings for four thousand continuous years. Preceding the time of Abraham, founded by Uz, the grandson of Noah, Damascus has the oldest real estate titles on earth.

The Koran appeared to be the greatest stock in trade in an old Mohammedan bookshop, but the dealer refused to sell me a copy for good American money or Syrian coin.

"Christians cannot buy my holy books," he declared. He named the price that was asked of the faithful. It was five times the price of English translations in the book shops of Boston. They believe in "profits" in trade, as well as deified "prophets" in worship.

After I had dined on "brains and eggs" and rested on a striped sofa, I realized I was in the city where sofas originated. You of other days who have done your courting on the parlor sofa, please remember that it was in Damascus that sofas were first used. There was also a reminder in that room that damask tablecloths—triumphs of the weaver's art—fabricated in Damascus, furnished the first distinctive trade name of sofa used in the barter of merchandise.

Queer mingling of the old and new in this gay old town. Street cars came swinging around a corner, on which is supposed to have been located the house occupied by Judas and Ananias about nineteen hundred and fifty-four years ago. The rattle and bang of the car and sparks from the trolleys overhead, to say nothing of

the ding-ding of the conductor's bell, seemed as much a sacrilege as the stabling of horses in the Kremlin—this famed city of antiquity antedating the Pharaohs of Egypt.

It was in the house of Judas that the Apostle Paul lived for three days while suffering from blindness, with which he was stricken at the time when the message was given to Ananias to "rise and go into the Street which is called Straight and inquire for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold he prayeth."

My Moslem companion was well versed in both testaments, as well as in the Koran, and informed us that the Judas who occupied the house we gazed upon was not the one who sold his Lord for the thirty pieces of silver. From this spot we went out along the road to see the wall where Paul made his escape from Damascus in the dead of night.

* * *

All the diseases that have plagued man since the beginning of time seems to be concentrated in the Orient. Huddled about the base of the wall were men and women in every conceivable state of mutilation. Some were without eyes, others without ears. There were men with broken and twisted bones protruding from their heads and bodies, some with joints dropping away from decay, while others had already lost limbs. It was a ghastly street scene. Here I had my first sight of a leper—a sufferer from the disease which has been the scourge of the Orient from the beginning of creation.

In the glare of the midday sun camel caravans were plodding into the city through the narrow streets, now filled to overflowing. These ungainly "ships of the

desert" were jostling each other as they attempted to pass. Reaching the corner of a street, I arrived in time to see a collision. Two camels loaded with numerous bags and boxes, on top of which the drivers were seated, ran into each other while trying to take a short cut around the corner. I have seen some interesting collisions in the crooked and narrow streets of Boston, but I never saw anything like this one. As they crashed into one another, both animals rebounded from the shock, and the drivers, vainly clutching at the boxes and bags upon which they sat, slipped from their places and slid down into the dust. One of the camels lost his footing and fell upon his haunches, his freight slipping from his back, hurtling to the ground, where several of the boxes crashed open and their contents, ground coffee and flour, poured out over the dirt. The drivers screamed curses upon one another's heads, and not content with that, damned each other's parents and ancestors back to Adam and Eve. A French soldier traffic cop arrived and separated them, making them take their camels out of the way to keep the street open to traffic. With note-book in hand, in the manner of a real 42d Street traffic cop, he jotted down copious notes in his book, but did not call for licenses and registration numbers. There was no discussion concerning speedometers.

My faithful man, "Friday" Abdullah, pointed out a spot on the side of a hill which was just visible from where we stood. I followed the direction of the outstretched finger and saw a tower rising up into the sky. "That tower," declared my guardian, "is the site where Mohammed in his youth, a camel boy such as you see here today, once looked down upon Damascus and called it Paradise." Damascus, conquered by the empires of

Persia, Assyria, Babylon, Chaldea and Rome, prospered under her conquerors and outlived them all, and today is smiling, thumbs down, at the last dying struggle of the Turkish empire.

"In ancient days," declared Abdullah, "Damascus was the rival of Bagdad as a seat of learning and culture. Here the great Oriental teachers sat in the temples surrounded by their students and discussed with them all manner of philosophy, poetry, religion, and kindred topics. Centuries ago these old professors practiced a method of teaching which you are beginning to realize is the most valuable—the informal method of discussion. In some educational institutions it is called the 'conference plan.'"

During our meanderings through the bazaar, I kept my eyes open for one particular piece of Damascus merchandise—probably the most famous of all.

Everywhere I went I looked for a real Damascus blade—the kind one reads of in the thousand and one tales of Syria. Although I visited several tiny blacksmith shops, the smiths refused to hammer blades to order, but I was able to buy a package of safety razor blades, which the vendor assured me were made in Damascus. They had the familiar face of King Gillette trademarked upon them, but I smiled and bought Wrigley's Spearmint at the next stall and imagined I was back at a red front cigar store corner in America.

The disregard for human life in the Orient seems incomprehensible. While we were at dinner that evening I noticed the furtive manner of some of the guests in and about the cafe, who refuse to sit with their backs to the windows. They were continually looking hurriedly behind to make sure, it seemed, that there was no one at hand with a dagger. Some of them looked as

though they were every minute expecting an assassin. A life seems to count for little. To snuff one out now and then has been a regular procedure of Oriental ways, as in the days of Arabian Nights, when human heads were chopped off as a pastime of royalty.

In almost every Oriental city I observed the stoic gloom that pervades the life of its inhabitants. There was much that seemed oppressive. There was nothing of the laughter and cheerfulness among the people as in other continents. The Arabs do not seem to even care how soon they hear the call of Charon's—ferryman of the Styx—"all aboard." Even the children seemed serious and impressed with the utter futility of life. Think of it—they have no Christmas trees or inspiration of the Master who declared that "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." The heavy pall of human despair in this life is trying on the nerves and makes the American visitor soon long for the bright lights of Main Street or Broadway in "Li'l ol' New York." There are no church socials, no basket ball parties to welcome the New Year. All the years seem to merge in one grim sepulchre of passing Time, making life a fate rather than a Kismet hope.



CHAPTER VII

Amid the Ruins of Baalbec and the Cedars of Lebanor in Old Syria

XIV

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes—or its prospers; and anon,
  Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face
Lighting a little Hour or two—is gone.

XV

And those who husbanded the Golden Grain,
And those who flung it to the Winds like Rain,
  Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

XVI

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose Doorways are alternate Night and Day
  How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his Hour or two, and went his way.

XVII

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep;
  And Bahrám, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, and he lies fast asleep.

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

CHAPTER VII

SKIMMING barely above the surf in a motor car along the beach of the Mediterranean in old Syria, we used a boulevard unknown to the ancient Phoenicians. The blue waves of the ancient sea unfolded like a scroll before us with a background of undulating hills in the distance. Guides jumped on the running boards of some of the cars to warn us to look out for quicksand! Leaving historic Mount Carmel, from which the prophet Elijah made his ascent in the distance, we circled the crescent beach into Acre. The old viaduct skirts the man-made mountains created by Napoleon's soldiers as a vantage point from which to train the guns in besieging the ancient city. The "Little Corporal," too, had his dreams of conquering Syria—and failed!

Stopping for a moment, we drank from the cold waters of this antique system.

"Water! Water again—you Americans make me sorry," grumbled the English passengers.

The viaduct looked like the Croton Aqueduct crossing the Hudson in New York—shriveled by time. It was built by the Romans in the fourth century and extends twenty miles across the plains to the mountains. It is a marvelously preserved object lesson in model masonry. Before those age-stained arches supporting the stone tunnel-tube through which the drinking water of Acre has passed from time immemorial, I stood with a feeling closely approaching veneration in taking a second draught—again to the disgust of the Englishmen. This is said to be the oldest

continuously used water supply in the world. It reminded me of the Pierian Spring on the lustrous shores of Iskanderum. Think of the accumulated water taxes this first pipe line represented!

Along the way a child with a goat and some big men with small donkeys, usually alone or in single file, were following the road close beside the surf line where glistened the sails of proud galleys and ships of Phoenicia that made Tyre the greatest seaport of its time. On the crest of the surf-worn chalk cliffs were lonely sentry boxes marking the frontier—the borderline between Palestine and Syria. At this point the authority of one great nation ceases and that of another begins. On one side were the English "Tommies"—on the other, the French "Poilus."

Picturesque villages nestle in the valleys and the mountains come closer to the sea, providing fresh water to irrigate the fields and orchards, which reach to the tidewater in places. Here and there scraggly olive and fig trees grow, providing sustenance for the villagers. Along the bleak coast, with its red earth reminding the American of the colorful Painted Desert in Arizona, "the camels are coming." I met a typical Highlander about whom so many thrifty stories are told.

"Where from?" he asked.

When I replied "America," he stepped back with a pleased expression.

"Hoot, mon!" he exclaimed, "dinna ye ken me old clansman, McBride?"

When I smiled at the question, he laughed heartily.

"There's no need of smiling, mon," he declared. "Ye should ken McBride—he's an American they call Henry Ford."

I bought some native bread at a tiny hut beneath

the trees by the side of a chalk cliff. This bread is considered a delicacy. It is long and thin as paper (some said as tough as leather), about two feet square. With a glass of strong acid phosphate liquid in which to dissolve it, "it melts in your stomach," but you are puzzled at first whether to use it as a napkin or a tablecloth.

Luxurious foliage here and there gave evidence of life-giving springs, each seeming to have a place in historical chronicle where water means so much to life in the arid East.

Following the shore line, we came to the site of a city once well known throughout the world. Tyre, long the most famous of Phoenician cities, is now but a place of ashes. We stopped at ancient Tyre and made tea, leaving new ashes to mingle with those of the past. The only vestige of the past that could in any way link age-old Tyre with today is contained in a small town of five thousand inhabitants known as El Sur. It is built around the north end of a peninsula which a thousand years ago may have been an island. The unimpressive ruins of the ancient city cover an area of about fifteen square miles. The cathedral, with its once magnificent monolith columns of rose-colored granite, now lying prostrate, is a mute token of former glory. From the springs of Ras-al-Ain not far away, still flows the water supply for the old city.

The Tyre of today tells a tragic story of the once greatest seaport of the world, now but a faint historic memory, not even with a place on the map. The intellectual and commercial center of the land of the Canaanites so often mentioned in the Bible, proud Tyre is now but a tomb of its former power and splendor—a graveyard of the worship of Baal.

In the early afternoon the old "57" type Cadillac of war days careened along the road into the city of Beirut. Mulberry trees furnished a splendid variety of landscape in a district famous for its fine silk products. The silk worm, the lowly producer of the costly fabric that clothed the kings and queens of old, is fed on the leaves of the mulberry trees.

In the dark paths with their flickering lamps, and in the dimly-lighted, narrow, winding streets, the intermingling of many races indicated that Beirut is one of the great cosmopolitan ports of the Mediterranean—the largest of the Near East. Here the peoples of the Orient and Occident meet to barter for products of East and West as in the centuries past.

On the circular embankment rimming the harbor a war monument, bearing an inscription in French, extolled the liberty of Syria. An English Tommy who stood beside me looked at the poetic French phrases and swore.

"Blimy," he said, "that's wot I calls nerve. Outside of Beirut, I never saw a Frenchie in Syria during the war, but still France gets the credit for freeing and running the bloomin' country under wot they calls a mandate."

French soldiers certainly were in evidence walking up and down, patrolling the embankment, while their comrades, off duty, were making merry in the cafes where Parisian jazz music, the strains of which every now and then burst upon our ears, gave an indication of the French influence under the Syrian mandate.

The motor car, sweeping along the harbor sea wall furnished a glimpse of many foreign ships gracefully riding at anchor, with lighters and gondolas continually plying between them and the shore. Disposing of the

passengers before the headquarters of the Nairn Transport Company—a project due to the foresight of two brothers who have finally succeeded in making the conquest of the sand and carrying the "overland desert mail"—the car continued onward toward the hotel.

Seated in one of the many quaint leafy arbor nooks of the hotel after dinner, I scarcely felt the sultry humidity of the evening. Close by a man rose quickly from his chair. "An American," I thought, and introduced myself. It was an American consul, Paul Knabenshue, who had become a real Beiruter, with the accent on the "rooter," who enlightened me over another cup of Turkish coffee.

* * *

"The American University at Beirut is the most famous foreign educational institution in the Orient," he declared. "It has graduated many young men and women, most of whom have had successful careers after graduation. They are going to play an important part in the Near East and glorify America's mandate of mercy that had its beginning here in the sixties sponsored by the American patriarch, David Crosby."

He arose and shook hands with me again. You cannot realize how good it is to shake hands with an American. With this ceremony completed, he continued his story:

"Beirut is one of the most healthful ports on the Mediterranean, and for this reason the American University was established here. The work carried on by President Bayard Dodge, son of the late Cleveland Dodge of New York, is a leaven in the loaf. Education is bearing fruit in the rehabilitation of the new nations of the Levant."

Later we drove to the Consulate, a beautiful house

furnished in Persian style built by a former Russian Grand Duke, and now transformed into one of the finest Consulates in the Orient. He continued again, referring to the University:

"Here cleanliness has come next to godliness. Thousands of bright students have gone forth from this institution and have helped make the transition period of the Orient a smoother affair. The Moslems in general have come to recognize in Christian education something that is helpful to themselves.

"The college is really non-sectarian, and has all the freedom and breadth of scope of any institution of learning in the United States. While the Christian religion is not required to be accepted by the pupils, its precepts are not forgotten."

It was a glorious evening. Aloft on the mountainside birds sang sweetly as they made their way to their nests in the treetops. Later when the stars peeped out of the heavens and the moon shone down upon us with a silver glow it somehow recalled the glory of ancient Syria and fired the imagination.

When I returned to my hotel room, the prospect was far from pleasing. There were yards of mosquito netting draped around the bed, but the windows were



wide open for the festive mosquitoes. It looked as though I was in for a lively night, for the oriental fleas are industrious. Insects of various kinds seem to infest the evening air at Beirut. To pass some wakeful hours I studied the map of Syria. It looked different now. The fact was here revealed to me that Damascus is not now in Palestine. Old geographic atlases and encyclopedias are out of date when it comes to boundary lines in Europe and the Near East after the World War.

Through the window I looked out upon the city built upon the side of the Lebanon Mountains. Electric lights gleamed like fireflies in the hot and humid night. Inside the cafes people were eating and drinking—but they did not seem merry.

I was restless and could not sleep so came down again to the street. A lonesome little lad followed me in the shadows. "Take me to America," he cried, when I turned to him.

These words were evidently his chief vocabulary in English. He dropped on his knees and looked up imploring me with his dark eyes.

"America!" he cried piteously.

It was the most eloquent tribute to my country I ever heard.

I thought he merely wanted money and gave him a coin, but he kissed my hand and murmured again, "Take me to America." The money evidently was not all he wanted—for he clung to my coat and guided me through the narrow, crooked streets—and never asked for more baksheesh, his parting words coming like a mournful refrain, "Take me to America, my mother there. Allah America!" and he dropped on his knees as if in prayer.

One young merchant with a peculiarly-shaped head was asleep waiting for customers. He awoke to sell me some cigarettes and smiled when he heard the American nasal twang.

"We know not why this mandate business," he said in a whisper. "We have no good business. We want American tourists—not French soldiers."

The French commercial invasion has not yet struck twelve. The presence of soldiers and the imperative suggestion to buy French goods on the Oriental plan did not appeal to the Syrians.

When I returned to the hotel, the German clerk, sleepily winding up his clock, told me, in broken accents: "There are twenty kinds of people and races already yet sleeping in this hotel tonight what don't speak the same language. Ach! the world is going goulash!"

Thinking of my mosquito-netting-draped couch, I asked the clerk for permission to park on the roof. I rolled myself up in a blanket and soon dozed off under the stars, dreaming of the desert. The raucous screams of a parrot in the court below betimes indicated when it was time to turn over.

The heavy dew of the morning was on the blanket when I awoke. Near me was a traveler from England, who had also sought the sleeping porch.

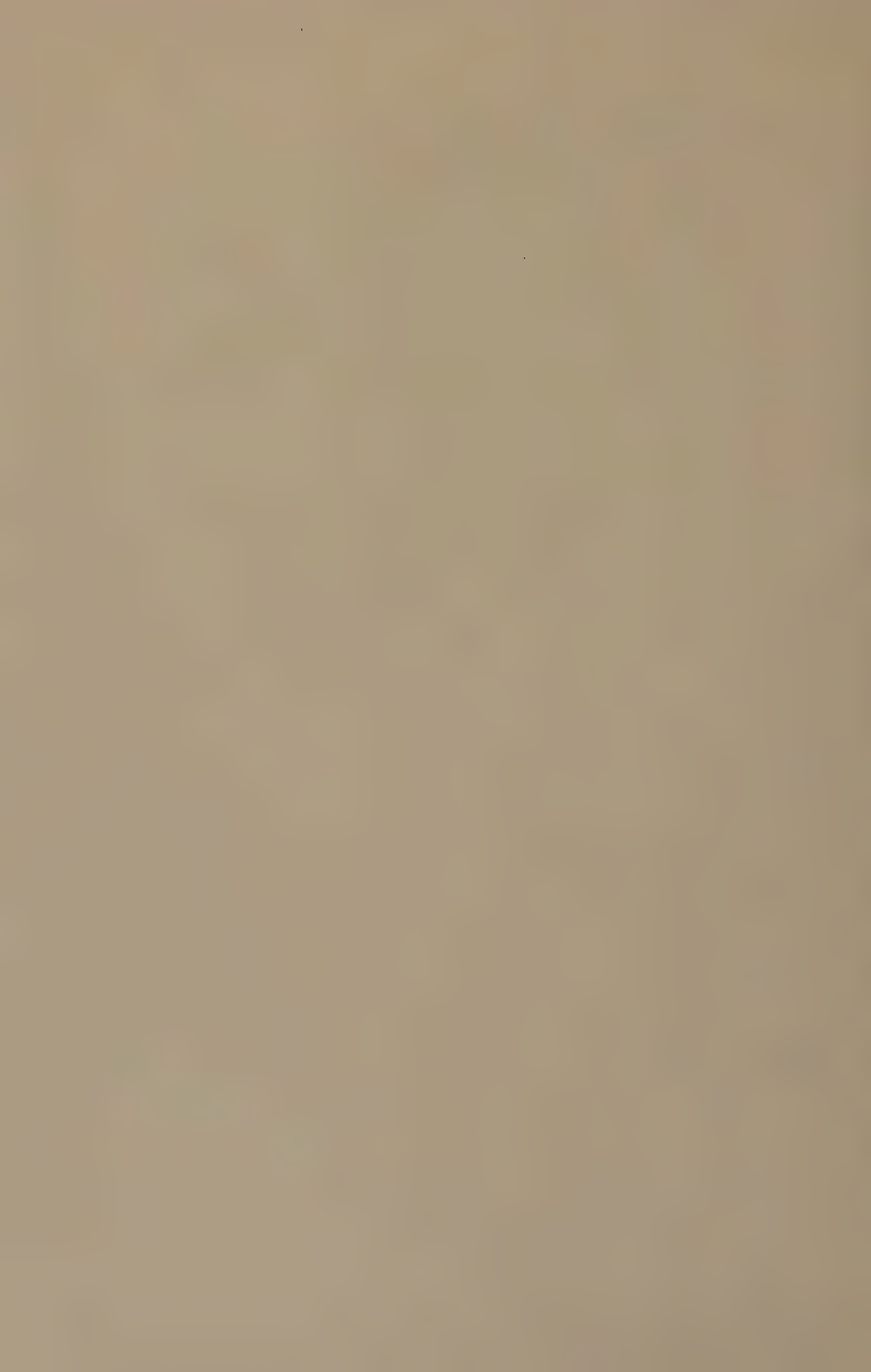
"I say, old chap," he said, rubbing his eyes as he sat up, "you have the champion snore of the Orient. No wonder that old parrot died last night. You've got a regular auto honk in your nocturnal repertoire."

As I took a morning stretch to better acquaint myself with the surroundings, I gazed on the Anti-Lebanon Mountains looming up back of Beirut in the first rays of the waking sun.

The chocolate peaks, rising high into the sky, are



The Second Station of the Cross, Jerusalem. Along this way passed that most tragic and epochal procession in all the long history of the world. Christ on his way to be crucified, attended by a rabble of followers: some sorrowful, pitying; some scornful, gloating. This spot, so intimately connected with the story of the last agony of the Saviour, is one of those milestones in human history that not all the ages yet to come shall serve to fade from the memory of man



eagerly sought during the summer months as a pleasure resort. Wealthy Syrians, Egyptians and merchants from far across the desert, from Damascus and far-off Bagdad seek this Switzerland of Syria for the cooling breezes of the Anti-Lebanons.

A picturesque cog railroad winds its way up the slopes to a height of nine thousand feet, but I decided to follow the new automobile roadway. This highway is a labyrinth of curves running almost at right angles. Whisking about them one feels as though he were crawling in and out around the teeth of a saw. Villages are clustered here and there up the heavy grade. A "Casino" running full blast, with all the gaiety of Monte Carlo, was one of the sights en route.

Ceaseless camel caravans and mule trains wind their way up and down these mountain roads during the night, for much of the traveling is done after dark in order to escape the heat of the day. In these caravans the leading camel rears a head light and the last camel carries a red lantern fastened to his tail. We passed one camel plodding along with a sleeping berth hanging from each side of his mountainous back. It was the queerest sort of a Pullman car I have ever seen, and I wondered how the passengers had any rest during the jolting journey, but they were sound asleep in both side berths. We passed many mule trains consisting of a number of beautifully ornamented and decorated white wagons, that looked like hearses, drawn by three or four mules gaily adorned, hitched tandem fashion. The muleteers themselves were attired in gaudy colored costumes, like toreadors or bull fighters, and were on the lookout for hyenas and the deadly cobra, which are still the dread of the caravans.

The road wound through a tunnel of trees in the

valley connecting the mountains. At Shortia, where there was an old hotel—a typical Eastern caravansarie —a detour was made to the famous ruins of Baalbec, among the grain fields on the slope of the Lebanon Mountains. During our ride we came upon some trees which the guide declared were a few of the remaining two hundred and fifty of the original "Cedars of Lebanon"—the trees used in the construction of Solomon's temple in Jerusalem. Riding out of the valley, we came upon an Arab village close to the so-called Tomb of Noah, which is said to shift its position with each generation. Noah was some tippler, we are told by the natives, reciting tradition told by father to son since the days of the Deluge.

Under the glare of the hot sun, the wheat fields reached almost to the very summit of the mountains. Flocks of sheep and goats were grazing in the valley below—a restful scene. Then our eyes fell upon the noblest ruins of history—Baalbec. For thousands of years, for centuries untold, their majesty and grandeur have eloquently told the story of the work of man.

Nothing but the shards of what was once a colossal, marvelous city lay in a panorama before us, remainders and reminders of the glory that had once been Baalbec.

From the Temple of the Sun we made our way over the towering wreckage of Time to the Temple of Jupiter. Clustered in the midst of this graveyard of monoliths, pillars, caryatids, and cross pieces, stood a number of towering columns indicating where others of the fifty-four columns had towered supporting the great temple. Marvelous in their symmetry and entrancing in the beauty of their Corinthian carvings are these monuments to the art of the stone-cutters of Baalbec.

In far-away lands evidences of their craft are to be found. The worship of Baal was practiced in England, Ireland, and America. The blood altars of sacrifice at Baaltec are duplicated in Yucatan to the god Chacmool; in the hills of Wales and in County Clare, Ireland. Ball's Bridge in Dublin and in Limerick City are titles imported from Lebanon. Huge Druid mounds of the Magi are to be found in such places as Saltburn, England, and the Danejon inside the very city walls of Canterbury, as well as all over Ireland, and there are several exactly similar in Central America—all catalogued as "prehistoric."

All that now remains of the Temple of Jupiter are the nine columns rising sixty-five feet into the sky and still upholding a part of the porch roof consisting of a great slab of stone finely sculptured underneath. With my imagination fired, I attempted to complete the picture of these structures, one of the marvels of the world. How they were built with the few crude tools we believe the workmen of that day possessed remains a wonder to greater engineering minds than mine. There was one block of stone two hundred feet long that looked big enough to serve as the foundation for a New York skyscraper, and yet there were no evidences of steam shovels and derricks having been used.

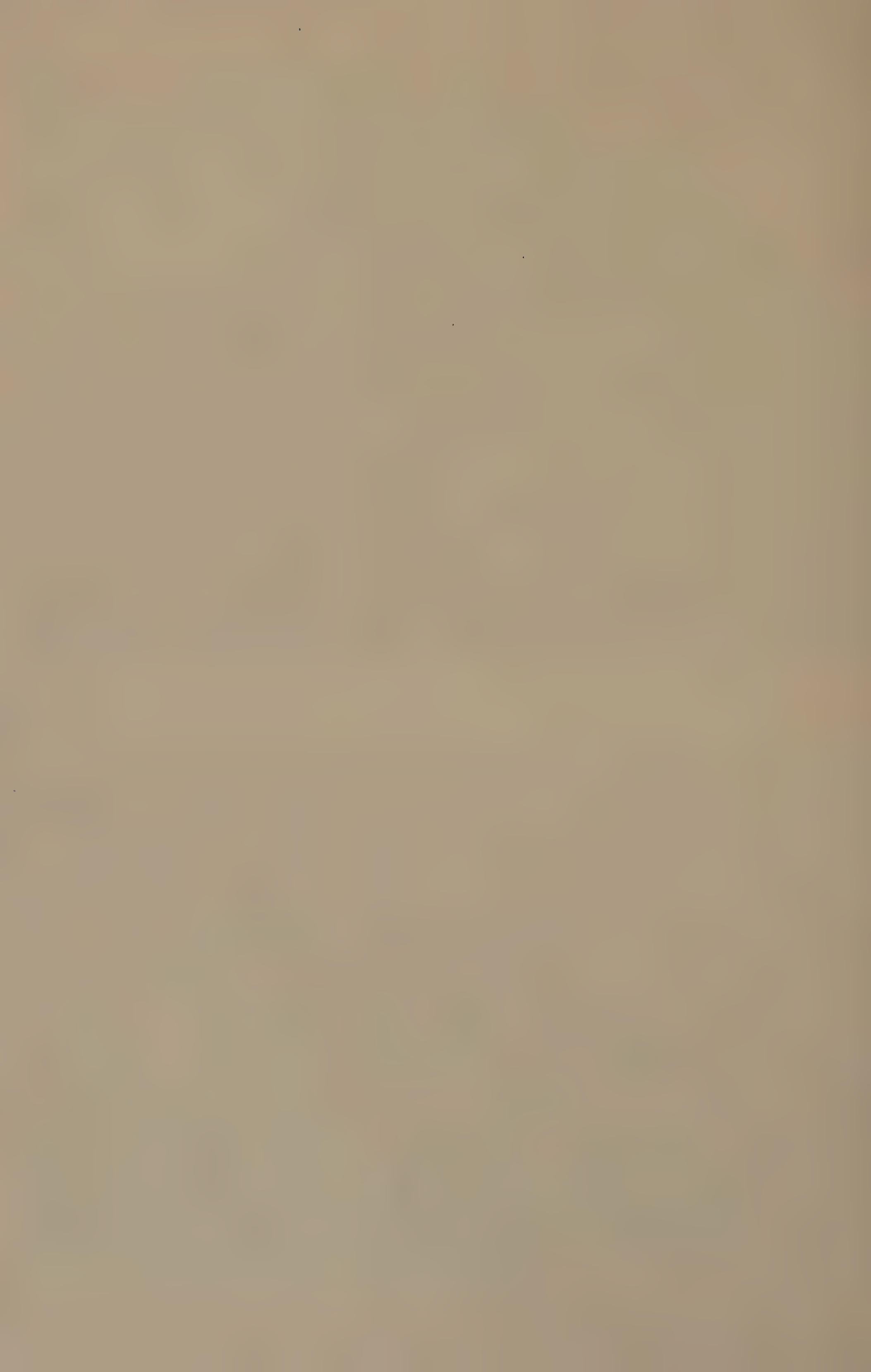
At the bottom of the great quarry was evidently what had been the mate to the slab which formed a part of the roof of Jupiter's Temple. It was an exact duplicate of the other, finished to the last detail, and ready for the hands of the architect and master builder to whose genius these noble ruins owe their origin. It was seventy feet long, fifteen feet in height and width—a footstool for the gods.

But hold—we are now on the borders of the Promised Land!



Soudanese passengers waiting to board a river steamer, Khartoum, Soudan

Joe Chapple (fourth from left, standing) and Chiefs of Soudan



CHAPTER VIII

The Pilgrimage to Palestine in a Pullman Sleeping Car

XVIII

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;
  That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in its Lap from some once lovely Head.

XIX

And this delightful Herb whose tender Green
Fledges the River's Lip on which we lean—
  Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

XX

Ah, my Belovéd, fill the Cup that clears
Today of past Regrets and future Fears—
  To-morrow?—Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand Years.

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

CHAPTER VIII

ALL my life I have wondered, with others, what sort of a place is the Palestine of today. Since boyhood there have been many times when, as I read Scripture or studied Sabbath-school lessons and stumbled over the—to me—unpronounceable words, I speculated as to the realities of the land of Israel. I had formed mental pictures inspired by the stories in the Word and the various scenes described in Holy Writ. My eagerness to see the land where our creed was nurtured and where the great drama of Time was enacted, was whetted on my journey.

Now came my first glimpse of the land of the Philistines, from the window of a Pullman berth!

And it was just like early morning travel in our own West; the same fine dust and sands of the plains, and the same hands extended for tips, "baksheesh," on the Palestine express.

Imagine crossing the Sinai desert from Cairo in Egypt in a Pullman! Fancy traversing the Land of the Wilderness, through which Moses led the Chosen People for forty years, after their miraculous escape from Egypt and the passage over the bed of the Red Sea.

Subconsciously there came to my mind wonderment as to what would have happened to earth and civilization had Moses been provided as I was, with a seat in an observation car to sweep on into the Promised Land over rails of steel—for I returned to Egypt by sea in order to make the entrace to Palestine by rail.

Some difference between the Lawgiver leading his

wandering hosts on foot and the railroad journey of today covering the same course, with the screech of the whistle awakening the desert wastes.

Although the first town I viewed in Palestine was named Gaza, there was really nothing there to gaze upon. Some time before our visit, Samson of the Book of Judges had carried off on his shoulders up the hill above the town the city gates. Others followed suit, helping themselves until Napoleon staged a fight there on his way from the Nile to besiege Acre, damaging the scenery some more. It was the center of hostilities during the World War and the gateway to the Canaan of Moses' day. The Promised Land I gazed upon bore little resemblance to "a land flowing with milk and honey." The scene that stretched out before me was a bleak and dreary plain, suggesting the areas of dry-farming experiments in Montana and the "Panhandle" district of Texas.

Passing a solitary turbaned traveler plodding his way, I waved to him from the car window and was glad to note that he understood the American hailing sign and returned the "so long" salute. At the stations along the way small groups of natives with their camels and donkeys looked up and silently followed the passing train with their eyes. The genial "hail fellow" humor of the western-American water tank towns was missing.

Following in the wake of the ancient caravans, the locomotive chugged on and on, climbing toward the blue hills of Judea. We were now over the boundary —in the land of Canaan. On either side were small farms being developed by colonies of Jews, Germans, and Americans. Refugees from Russia, Austria and Poland have come thousands of miles and endured

every conceivable hardship in order to have a home in Zion.

Men with long skirts and women in short ones with veils covering their heads were engaged in clearing away the wire-like sagebrush and trimming the cactus hedges, which grow very rapidly, and, as a barricade, are as formidable as a barbed wire fence. There is but one animal that can eat his way through it with impunity —the original teetotaler—the camel. He regards the prickly thorns as a condiment that seems to make cactus "hot-dog" a delicacy.

It seemed as if the Holy Land was experiencing a lively real estate boom. Blueprints of plots and corner lots were in evidence. Some of the California methods of exploiting acreage in unlimited areas were being used. Payment for land was being made, in some cases, in stock. At Tel-a-Viv, near Jaffa, there is a Jewish colonial development in which the energy and ability of Americans, using modern methods, have built up a thriving community.

* * *

The chief seaport of Palestine, as in biblical times, is Jaffa, the city from which Jonah sailed to encounter the whale. On the docks was a strange mingling of races and costumes. One American made himself conspicuous by whistling the bromidic "Yes, We Have No Bananas," although there were plenty of bananas on the wharf. Caravans were coming into the city and discharging their cargoes of wool, oranges that looked like lemons, grain, and olive oil, just as they did when Solomon, from the height of his regally embossed and jewel-studded throne, dispensed his words of wisdom.

On a high rock overlooking the sea, from which there

was an entrancing view of the Mediterranean, stood the house of Simon, the tanner. The site of the home of Dorcas, the first great woman missionary, located on a road leading out of the city, proved a magnetic attraction for the American women tourists. They carried their knitting with them and spent a real Dorcas-like afternoon at the ruins, sitting on the mosaic floor that marked the tomb of the brave woman who was raised from the dead by St. Peter. Here she was wont to sit and sew for the poor.

On the platform of the depot at Lud I met an American. I knew he was a fellow-countryman by the big fat cigar encircled with a "garter" that he was smoking. I hailed him and found we were neighbors in Boston. Isaac Harris, with his family, had just arrived via Port Said to spend a year in Jerusalem and the Holy Land. The children were to be placed in a school at Haiffa, while the parents were to follow out their plans and do something for the country and its people. He had visions of the Zion that was to be when Palestine, both in name and fact, was to become a homeland for the Jews.

"We want some place that the Jew can call his own," he said. "We want conditions such that the world cannot say of any of us, 'He is a Polish Jew, a Russian Jew, or an American Jew.' In this Zionist work we are proving that the Hebrews are great idealists and are as ready as ever to sacrifice and suffer for their ideals—to return to the land of their forefathers."

A successful lawyer, Mr. Harris gave up his practice in order to accomplish the work he and his wife long had in mind. A year in the Holy Land they believe will be of great benefit to the children, thus giving them the real and fundamental ideals of Jewish life.

While we were talking, a good sized group of Arabs in mottled garments gathered about us, watching with as much interest as though we were two of the principal performers in a minstrel show. Harris smiled and remarked: "They're probably trying to figure out which one of us is the millionaire. They evidently have some choice acreage to sell."

Not far from Lud, which, in ancient writ was "the city of merchants," I looked upon a picturesque scene that reminded me of an old Sunday-school leaflet. Here, in fields "ripe unto the harvest," oxen were trampling on the grain, and it was being flailed in the same way as in the days of Christ. Children playing about were working betimes helping to gather the golden kernels as the wind sifted the chaff from the wheat. There was nothing wasted; even the straw, ground to a dark dust, was packed in bags to be used as a forage for the animals. Lud is today a railroad junction, just as it was a stopping point in the days when the caravans, coming in along the roads leading into the city, met and exchanged the tidings of the time. Now, one branch of the steam railway leads on into Jerusalem, another to Jaffa, and the sleeper continues along the main line to Haiffa.

Traveling by train was too slow, so I chartered a motor car. It seemed strange to be speeding fifty miles an hour "burning up" the dusty roads of this ancient land, but gasoline has made the whole world kin. The first stop was at the town of Samaritans at Nablus, or Schechem, as it was called in olden times. Founded long before Jerusalem was built, it is one of the oldest settlements in the world. At the present time it is a thriving town with about thirty thousand inhabitants, almost all of whem are Moslems.

Some few Jews and Christians live and do business there, but they are hated by their Mohammedan neighbors. As the chief commercial link between Damascus and Jerusalem, it is still a junction point for caravans.

Schechem is the home of a number of people who insist that they are descended from the original Samaritans mentioned in the Bible. The high priest claims that he is directly descended from Aaron, the brother of Moses, who, they say, wrote the five scrolls which they possess. Shown to me, they looked much like the Torah I later saw in the synagogue at Jerusalem, except that the parchment was yellow with years. The high priest proclaims that they were written not more than twelve years after the Israelites were led into Palestine. The orthodox Jews reject the scrolls as false and look down upon the Samaritans, who, in turn, claim to be the only true children of Israel, and despise the Jews.

The Schechemites still celebrate the Passover and Feast of Pentecost in the original fashion. They eat their Passover meal reclining as did the early Jews, and smear their tents with the blood of the lambs they slaughter for the feast.

Not far from Nablus, just below the road to Jerusalem, I came to the well at which Christ met the Samaritan woman. A priest of the Greek Church, wearing a tall hat without a rim, preceded me down the steps. The opening is about a yard wide. A receptacle, in which a lighted candle was placed, lowered into the well to a distance of fifty feet, showed that water was still there.

From nearby, the farm once cultivated by Abraham was pointed out. It was in this vicinity, at Mount

Lunching in the Desert. At the left, Mr. Robert Farrington of Boston; in the centre, Jerry Nairn, of the Nairn Transport Company; at the right, Joe Mitchell Chapple, editor of the "National Magazine." This roadside meal was eaten in the midst of the Syrian desert, while on the way to Damascus—the old, old town where the Apostle Paul "saw the light"

Jeff Parsons "boils the kettle" and makes tea for lunch, while Mrs. Farrington helps in the preparation of the meal, and Mr. Chapple is an interested on-looker. A little gasoline, some dried camel grass, a few bits of old wooden boxes provide fuel for the fire, and an auto robe spread upon the sand serves the purpose of a table



Gerizin, the Bible tells us, that Mary and Joseph, when returning to Nazareth, lost the Child Jesus, and going back into Schechem, discovered him in the Temple teaching the doctors of the law.

* * *

At the foot of the desert hills of Moab, by Nebo's lonely mountain where Moses was buried, are the fields in which Ruth garnered the wheat. There hundreds of men and women were in the fields pulling up the tares, as told of in the parable of old, which, if permitted to mature, would give the flour a very bitter and unwholesome taste.

At lunch prolifically-seeded pomegranates played a juicy part, behaving like grapefruit operated on with a spoon. Later in the blinding glare of the early afternoon sun, I started toward Bethlehem. Stopping on the way at Rachel's Well, I looked upon the waters that may have quenched the thirst of Jacob, who, it is recorded, waited seven years for Rachel.

On the winding, dusty road we passed estates of some wealthy people who had accumulated riches elsewhere and returned to build new homes on their native soil.

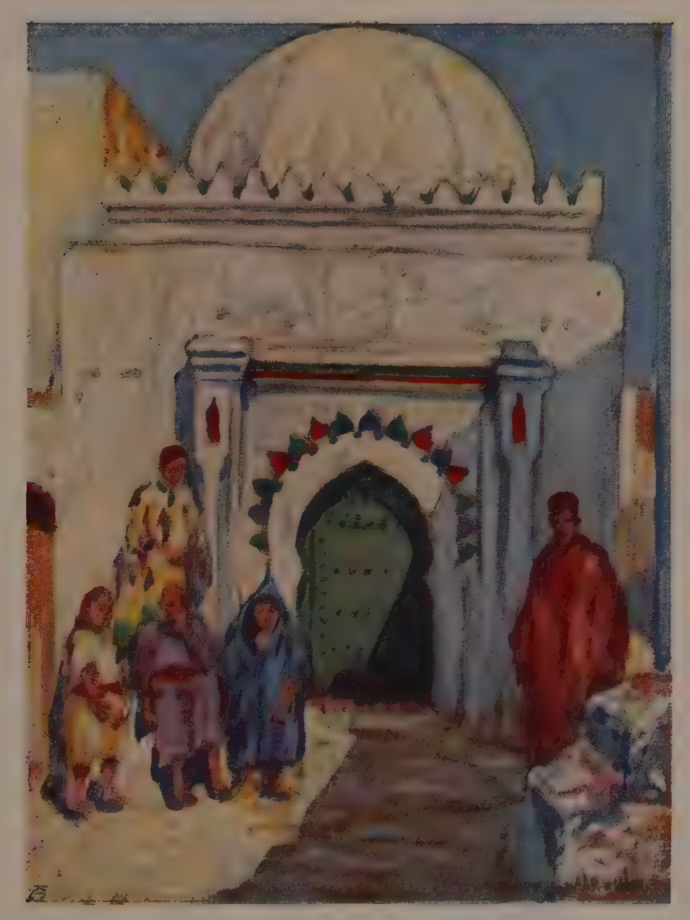
Rounding a sharp curve on the hillside, we came upon Bethlehem, considered one of the most prosperous sections in Palestine. The Bethlehemites are, for the most part, descendants of the early Crusaders. Thrifty and industrious, they derive a worthwhile revenue from the manufacture of beads and other articles from clam shells of the Dead Sea. They are all Christians; the Jews have not penetrated into Bethlehem and are content to allow the Christians to hold the city which they revere as the birthplace of the lowly Nazarene.

For a while I watched the workers as they filed the beads by hand in a primitive fashion. The workmen are content to use the same tools which their fathers and their many-times great grandfathers used. Putting a shell in a wooden hand vise, screwing it up tightly, they file away with a coarse file until the shell is developed into the finished trinket.

The Bethlehem maidens are most attractive in their vari-colored and picturesque clothes. The married women wear a distinctive costume consisting of a bright-colored skirt and wide shawl, thrown about the shoulders. The massive headdress is fez-shaped, over which hand-made lace is spread. The women folk crochet this lace, which requires much of time and patience.

Entering one of the shops, I recognized the proprietor, Selim Michel, whom I met in 1893, during the Chicago Exposition, where he had charge of the Oriental exhibits. After we had established a mutual acquaintance, he patted me on the shoulder. He gossiped familiarly, referring tenderly to the old "Midway Plaisance," like one who had never left the vicinity of Jackson Park. It was an agreeable surprise to encounter an old-time World's Fair acquaintance in Bethlehem. "We're up to date here—see American newspaper with cross word puzzles. What you do with it—play checkers?"

Now for the real thrill of Bethlehem, the most famous birthplace in the world! The Church of the Nativity is said to have been built over the spot where stood the manger in which Christ, the Messiah, was cradled. Here I witnessed the services of three Christian denominations, the Roman Catholic, the Armenian, and the Greek Orthodox, all going on at the same time. In the crypt below, by the light of the flickering candles, I



Courtesy *Home & Abroad* — Water color by Konrad Meindl

A Mosque in the Orient



made my way to the site of the sacred manger, where I knelt and bowed with the other pilgrims.

Almost every point of interest in the Holy Land is associated with some bloodshed, and yet each spot seemed replete with memories of the Prince of Peace. Even in Bethlehem around the spot upon which we now stood, there had been many a fierce and bloody combat waged.

Since the days of Mohammed, the Moslems and the Christians have wrangled over the golden city because of its association with their religious beliefs. It was at Jerusalem, the Mohammedans claim, that their Prophet made his ascension to heaven on his magic carpet, and here they believe he will sit astride a rock projecting from the Mosque of Omar on judgment day.





A real "blowout" along the way. The desert sand under the fierce glare of the noonday sun becomes superheated, greatly expanding the air in the inner tubes, and the cars are not only heavily laden, but travel at high speed to cross the sand, baked like thin ice



CHAPTER IX

From Dan to Beersheba in Four Hours in a Motor Car

XXI

Lo! some we loved, the loveliest and best
That Time and Fate of all their Vintage prest,
  Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to Rest.

XXII

And we, that now make merry in the Room
They left, and Summer dresses in new Bloom,
  Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth
Descend, ourselves to make a Couch—for whom?

XXIII

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
  Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End!

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

CHAPTER IX

THERE were no traffic cops in sight as we rolled along in a Rolls Royce to Nazareth. It was to here that Christ was brought as a little child, after His sojourn in Egypt whither his parents were compelled to flee to escape from Herod's inhuman order to slay all male children under two years of age, and it was here that Christ spent His happy youth and young manhood, up to the time of His public life.

Nazareth, where the lowly Nazarene began His career, lies in the center of a group of rough hills and mountains. This small city of less than twelve thousand inhabitants is seventy miles from the birth shrine at Bethlehem. Many of its people are Christians of the Greek-Catholic and Protestant faiths, but the usual Mohammedan majority prevails. It is the center for the Christian churches, convents, and monasteries in Palestine, visited and supported by people from every part of Christendom. The buildings are ugly and squalid, but the scenery suggests the landscape of New England. In the distance, standing out like a sentinel of the ages, is the mountain where Elijah hid the true prophets and then slew the false ones.

After sunset, when Nazareth has ceased its commerce, comes a characteristic scene of biblical landscapes when the beauty of Nature asserts itself.

Wandering through its streets, I was an object of interest to the Nazarene tots, with whom I stopped to play. They are chubby-faced youngsters and are a pleasing sight in their gowns of yellow and red. They go barefoot, but seem as happy as the better cared for

American children, although they didn't romp and play in the same manner.

Under the spell of many holy associations, I learned that close by was the scene of the Annunciation, where Mary was told by the Angel Gabriel that she was chosen to be the Mother of God. Whether Fundamentalists or Modernists, a feeling of awe comes to all at this sacred spot.

A vocational school for children has recently been established in the city through the efforts of the Near East Relief. One of the buildings occupied by the school is on the site of the carpenter shop where, it is claimed, Joseph plied his trade, and the boy Jesus received his training in the trade of his foster father. The building is owned by the Roman Catholics. Father Kersting discovered in excavating beneath the site of a church, built during the Crusades, a grotto which many now believe to have been the actual work of the Master Carpenter.

The various sects here vie with each other in the possession of anything thought to be connected with the life and death of Jesus. Some of these claims may seem ridiculous, but one cannot help being impressed with the reverence bestowed upon places and objects that may have had the slightest connection with the life of Christ. Mary's Well is, perhaps, the one authentic object, because it remains Nazareth's sole water supply.

The Nazarenes, like other races of the East, do not rejoice at the birth of a girl. The boys are the pride of their parents' hearts. As I wandered through one of the streets a little lad came out of his home and ran halooing to his neighbors. I asked the guide the occasion for all the excitement and was told that a baby

boy had just arrived at the lad's home, and that he was spreading the glad tidings. Such an event is the signal for a grand celebration, and the relatives bring presents for the new-born babe. I presented a tiny American flag. It may seem strange, but these children in the land where Christ was born have never known a Christmas tree or a Christmas present!

On my visit to one of the Mohammedan schools I found the teacher to be a swarthy sheik, who sat before his class like a tailor at work. The children also sat on the floor and chanted aloud the verses and texts of the Koran. The slates used are made of black-coated tin with Arabic characters painted on them.

* * *

The Pearl of Palestine to me is the Sea of Galilee, which can be seen in the distance—a soothing, restful scene, suffused with the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount.

These sturdy fisher folk carry on their occupation much the same as their ancestors did when Christ chose His disciples from among them. Over two thousand varieties of fish abound in the sacred waters of Galilee, and are even now sent daily to the markets of Jerusalem. As I inspected the baskets filled with the silvery horde that had been brought in, I recalled the miracle of the loaves and fishes, when Christ fed the multitude, and the many days that Christ spent at Capernaum—now only a memorable pile of stone.

As far below the sea level as our Great Lakes are above it, the Sea of Galilee seemed like a gem set in the Palestine hills. From the hotel at Tiberius, the only large port on its shores, one looks on a scene that suggests the beautiful lake district of central New York

which J. Fenimore Cooper describes in his "Leather-Stocking Tales." The surface of the water by day sparkled like an immense cluster of diamonds; by night it glistened like snow, and the minarets of the mosque stood out like ghostly spectres in the shadows that enveloped the district like a funeral shroud. In



the bright light of the early morning the shore line stood out like an etching in the clear dry atmosphere.

Now I can well believe the old tradition that "the King of Fleas holds his court at Tiberius," for, despite the netting about the bed and the screening on the window, K. F. and his retinue found me out and did not leave me all night. This is the town Mark Antony presented to Cleopatra during his dizzy sporting days in Egypt, possibly after a bad night with the fleas.

The hot baths near here mentioned by Pliny, the Roman writer, are a sad comparison to the many regal-hoteled hot spring resorts in America. Tiberius was at one time a capital city and is one of the places that

we have no record of Christ having visited. He chose Capernaum, also on the shores of Galilee—a sort of rival town established by Herod Antipas, who seems to have been the first live real estate boomer in and about Tiberius.

Stopping at the house in Bethany where Mary and Martha lived and opened their home to the Savior, I had a bite of lunch on the pile of stones marking this site. Standing on this mound, I gazed down upon the grim, arid stretches leading into Jericho, which lies a distance of a thousand feet below sea level. The crumbling walls of the ancient city nestle amid patches of green which made it seem like an oasis in the desert. On the plains of Jezreel, Gideon's band with his three hundred trumpeters jazzed the Mianites into confusion and defeat. It is the one spot with any semblance of life in the midst of a barren waste, and suggests the wilderness of Judea, which remains eternally the same—seemingly cursed by Nature—for nothing can live within its boundaries.

While the water of the beautiful Sea of Galilee is brackish to the taste, the fountain of Elijah at Jericho, fed by these same waters of the Jordan, is made sweet by the salt which is thrown into it. Not far distant is the spot where Elijah is said to have been carried to heaven in a whirlwind. Hereabout are many tombs, the sight of which impelled Mark Twain to say that he would rather sleep in some of these than in most of the houses.

The hours spent on the banks of the Jordan are disillusioning. This river resembles an Iowan creek, although the current is swift in places. The water is cold, but when bottled has the appearance of watered milk, and tastes even worse—bitter and salty. The

shores are washed by the sacred waters in which millions of people have been baptized in the name of Christ.

Wandering on the shores of the Dead Sea, near an extinct volcano, we came to the place where Sodom and Gomorrah, pre-eminent examples of wickedness, once throbbed with life. There were a number of sulphur springs about and evidences of volcanic eruptions, which made it seem probable that the fire and brimstone which obliterated these cities, as was prophesied, did a quick job and changed the climate. The Dead Sea has no outlet and is properly named, for it is located in about the deadest locality I know of on the surface of this terrestrial globe—a fitting setting for a scene in Dante's Inferno. It is the deepest sunken hole or dent on the face of the earth. The surface of the Dead Sea is 1,308 feet below sea level, or about twice the height of the Equitable Building. It is almost impossible for a human being to stand upright in its waters, and it is reputed to be even heavier than our own Salt Lake. Here the water is one-fourth solid and twenty times more salty than the ocean. Swimming was out of the question and my shapely limbs were swept out from under me when I challenged its supremacy. The salt clung to my skin like glue, and my clothing, when dressing, felt very uncomfortable, to say the least, quite convincing me had I taken a drink of the water, I would have been ossified. This sea contains a strong pickle, with impregnation of potassium chloride, which may help out the potash supply of the world.

* * *

Palestine is truly cosmopolitan. In the fields and in the cities, side by side, the people of a score of races live and work. The impulsive spirit of America was

at hand competing with the persistent wiles of the German and French salesmen. Palestine was proclaimed the "land of the free" under the Balfour declaration, with Sir Herbert Samuels, himself a Jew, the first High Commissioner for Great Britain. The veil of mystery which enshrouded these lands for centuries has been rent asunder. The people are becoming more interested in modern methods of living. The squalor and wretchedness in which their forebears lived is a revelation and they are deriving much benefit by contact with the newcomers. They are now establishing sanitary systems and schools and endeavoring to change their age-old customs to the better ways of the western world.

To one great religious organization in particular is much credit due along this line—to the Zionists. To many who have lived in the Holy Land under the old regime, America is the Land of Promise; and to those who are making a return pilgrimage to Zion the fires of hope are kept burning by British appropriations and occupations, augmented by energy and optimism.

Whether the Jews will ever return to Palestine in large numbers is difficult to determine. The Jews have ever had a longing for their homeland, and particularly as they reach the ebbtide of life, the wish seems to grow with the years for a return to their ancestral home. The desire to live amid the scenes loved by their fathers and to be buried in the midst of their long dead brethren in the tombs of their forbears is gaining ground rapidly.

A man who has done much for Palestine is Nathan Strauss, the great American philanthropist. Fifteen years ago he made his first visit to the land of his ancestors. It took him months to cover the territory I

covered in forty-eight hours. Trips I made in a few hours required three days' traveling for him in a mire-covered buggy. He established relief stations and fed the poor in Palestine. Supplying pasteurized milk for the children was a means of saving the lives of thousands of these little ones.

The work of this great American altruist evoked the enthusiasm of the late Lord Northcliffe in a hearty support of the Zionist movement. The late journalist declared afterwards that the one place that had enthralled him of all he had visited in his trip around the world was Palestine and Trans-Jordania. Day after day he rode in an automobile over the arid deserts. His chauffeur, who drove the machine in which I rode, told me the late Lord Northcliffe immersed himself in the waters of the Jordan, as if in preparation for the voyage to the Great Beyond, which he felt he was soon to make.

Christians and Jews are equally divided in Palestine, with about three times as many Arabs.

"We don't want to drive the Arabs out," said a prominent Zionist whom I met at Tel-a-Viv. "That would be as unjust as in the earlier days in the South in the United States, when an attempt was made to discriminate against the negro. They are indigenous to the soil and to the country. They own much of the land and there is a feeling that under the new order of things the Semitic races will be able to amalgamate, as far as living in peace and harmony and with a common interest, is concerned. We have already succeeded in re-establishing the use of the original Hebrew language."

All signs are printed in Arabic, Hebrew and English. The later day Hebrew pioneers have come from all over the world to assist in the rebuilding of the

homeland. They are digging ditches, working on the roads and in the fields, clearing and draining the swamps, constructing and planting and harvesting. A large number of these people are young college men, and there are some women, too, among them, who have never before engaged in manual labor. The struggles these colonists are waging against a long neglected soil, against the ravages of disease, and the inroads of marauders, is really heroic. But great as are the difficulties, greater and more inspiring is the reward—a united people, a living tongue, and a glorious land—a just heritage of faith in the living God!

Think of a motor ride of less than a day from "Dan to Beersheba," a distance equal to that from New York to Albany. Where once stood the village called "Dan," there was only a grassy plot amid a few trees bringing to mind the lines of Goldsmith's "Deserted Village." There was practically nothing to see, but I was imbued with the zest of the hunt for places of historic interest.

At Cana we drank from the spring from which it is said the water was secured that Christ turned into wine at the marriage feast (His first miracle). It was about the only place that seemed to enjoy more prosperity than in the days of the miracles. Here they still use the ancient limestone mortar in their masonry. They store their water and liquor, ancient-fashion, in stone jars, and yet they insist prohibition is ages-old among the Moslem citizens of Cana.

There is not much to Beersheba to indicate that it is one of the terminal points referred to in the oft-heard expression, from "Dan to Beersheba," but I felt, as I stretched out in that little old hotel—if this is Beersheba—that is enough!

Tomorrow I was to look upon Jerusalem, The Golden.



CHAPTER X

Entering the Gates of Ancient Jerusalem, The Golden

XXIV

Alike for those who for *Today* prepare,
And those that after a *Tomorrow* stare,
  A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries
"Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor There!"

XXV

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discuss'd
Of the Two Worlds so learnedly, are thrust
  Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn
Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust.

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

CHAPTER X

JERUSALEM distinctly is not golden, nor is it at all beautiful, seen at the close range that I looked upon it in the latter days A. D. 1925.

And yet the ancient city has another phase for contemplation. The Hebrew sings of it as his ancient capital; the Christian associates it inextricably with his faith, but apart from purely religious, historical, philosophic, metaphoric and creedal considerations, there is another outstanding part played by the City of David. It is the fact that Jerusalem since it was built has been the objective of more wars than any other place on earth. Even in our own day, during the World War, the old city, after some stirring fighting, was removed from the mailed fist of Germany and the Turks and given over to the control of Britain, under whose hand the Jew, the Moslem and the Christian are today maintaining all the conflicts of old—in mental reservation at least.

Jerusalem the bloody! It was here war had its genesis and here the great prophet, general, and leader, Joshua, first laid down the axioms of bloody contests in details which military engineers still follow minutely. It was founded in 1913 B. C., one thousand years before Romulus and Remus established the city of Rome, and it was taken in 1451 B. C. by Joshua, who slew its king. Four hundred years later King David captured the city and made it his capital. It was here Solomon built his temple, and for another long period the city prospered and grew mighty and wicked. Isaiah and Ezekiel thundered their wrath

upon its people; more terrific scourgings never were given than those awful maledictions poured out by the two great prophets, who were specific and frank, as the Old Testament tells us.

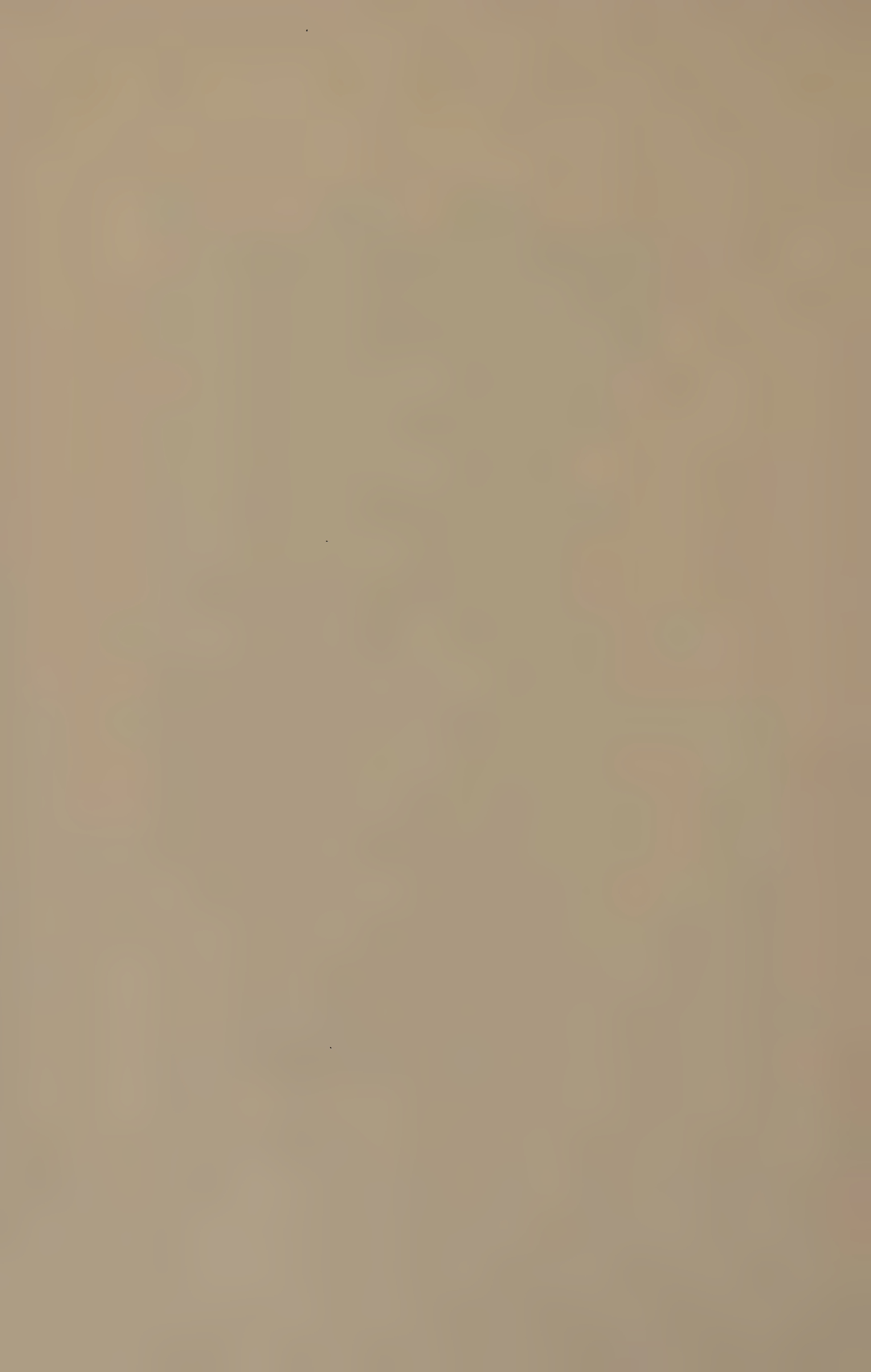
The Persian king, Chosroes, took the city with dreadful slaughter in 614 A. D. The Roman emperor Heraclius recaptured it fourteen years later, and then came the long sequence of tragedies with Jerusalem alternately the prey of Christian and Saracen.

As I neared the city with mingled emotions—spiritual thoughts naturally crowding out others for dominance—there persisted the reminder that I was nearing earth's greatest battlefield, the home of many wars, the stormiest strife-ground earth ever knew—and yet withal the Holy City!

I thought of the sixth bondage, most bitter of all the period of slavery of the Jews; I reflected on the compact between God and Abraham, and it impressed me that God is not mocked, and that His punishments are dreadful, part of His immutable laws by which He rules His universe, including our little world. There passed in my mind stories of the colossal massacres, the slaughter of a half million men, women and children when Jereboam lost his country; of another butchery of half a million when Abijah defeated Israel. There came to me, too, a sense of that awe that stayed the hand of Alexander, the world conqueror, at Jerusalem, when the high priest subdued his spirit and the great warrior offered sacrifice to the God of the Hebrews and departed. I thought of the passage in history telling of the five hundred and eighty thousand Jews slain by other foes. Then that most awful massacre in history, in the year 70 A. D., when Titus took Jerusalem, sacked and burned the city and the temple



Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. It occupies the traditional site of the stable where Christ was born. Without doubt, it is the oldest church in Christendom. The once-impressive entrance has long since gone, leaving the outer walls bare, but the interior is still gorgeous



and killed one million, one hundred thousand Jews in one fell swoop.

And yet—Jerusalem and the Jew have survived! But enough of history.

Nearing the city, the concept of present times soon crowded out further reflections on the past.

The train swept over the grade crossing, an automobile shot just ahead—barely missed—as at any American railroad crossing where are massacred its thousands of victims. Now I was jolted into a present tense of wonderment.

Reverently I closed my eyes when Sadulah, in sepulchral tones, told me we were about to look upon the Holy City. I had conjured up a vision of biblical life that was a memento of my childhood study of Sunday-school lessons.

And this was Jerusalem!

When I opened my eyes, irregular rows of substantially built houses of brick and cement, and newly-roofed houses with red tile met my gaze. Here and there were tiny, snuggling bungalows with overhanging roofs recalling scenes in Switzerland and California. From the suburban heights the outline of the turreted old walls, minarets and towers of the City of David was first viewed in the lengthened shadows of a glorious September morning.

Bathed in clouds of yellow dust, Jerusalem, the Golden, in the grayish leaden light failed to fill the imaginative picture. In the spring months the whole surface of the earth undergoes a metamorphosis. Then, the mountains are green and the earth is gay with the blossoms of the three thousand varieties of flowers that adorn the plains and hills of the ancient home of the Israelites.

At the station we intruded upon a scene of commotion that seemed out of place in the slow-moving Orient. "Tourist contractors" were busy capturing "prospects," and describing in glowing and picturesque terms their respective itineraries. They seemed out of patience with the haste-loving Americans who were trying to cut down the time ordinarily required to see the various points of interest.

One American banker who had come in on our train insisted upon "doing" the whole of Palestine in one day.

"Why," he protested, "in a rubberneck wagon I can do the whole of New York in that time!"

There was little or no chance of seeing Jerusalem from the train, and hailing a taxicab that whizzed through a barrage of dust and dashed over an old stone bridge, I came close to the irregular walls enclosing the old Holy City nestling just below the railroad station.

The motor brakes were set suddenly before the Hotel Allenby, located at the Flat Iron Triangle on the side hill. The hostelry was named for the British general who drove the Turks out of Palestine. It is located at the top of Jaffa Road in Jerusalem, which leads down to the Jaffa Gate from the outskirts to the old city. As we entered, servants of the hotel in their picturesque fezzes and long skirts gave us all the deference due a potentate. They took my black suit case and solemnly motioned me to follow, while the clerk blotted my signature and made a notation in Hebrew beside it. Scarcely a word was spoken. There was not a moment to be wasted, for I wanted to go inside the old walls at once before the Mosque closed.

Many of the most interesting sights must be visited on foot, so I immediately started toward the old city in order to do as much of the sightseeing before the blaze of the midday sun made it too uncomfortable.

Walking toward old Jerusalem is far from a pleasant stroll. The cobblestones and the rough, narrow, hilly streets of the city outside made it difficult for the carriage, drawn by two alleged horses, to climb, especially with as bulky a cargo as myself inside. After three attempts to make the grade, I got out and walked. Here and there were evidences of a building boom. There were several business blocks being constructed among the low, rambling, flat-roofed structures that made them seem comparatively almost like skyscrapers.

The approach to the grim old mountain of masonry is an inherent lesson in history. I wanted to hear the "sermons from these ancient stones" and feel the cold chill of their surface. Various eras of occupation are as clearly defined as geological strata. The walls constructed by the nations that have conquered Jerusalem stand out in clear relief. The rocks restored by the Romans were solid and massive. Those of the Hebrews, more aged and mottled, were revealed as vividly as the layers in a chocolate cake. Captured fifty different times by conquering armies, according to historical chronicles, before Allenby took possession, there remain these stolid mementoes of warring humanity for thirty centuries past.

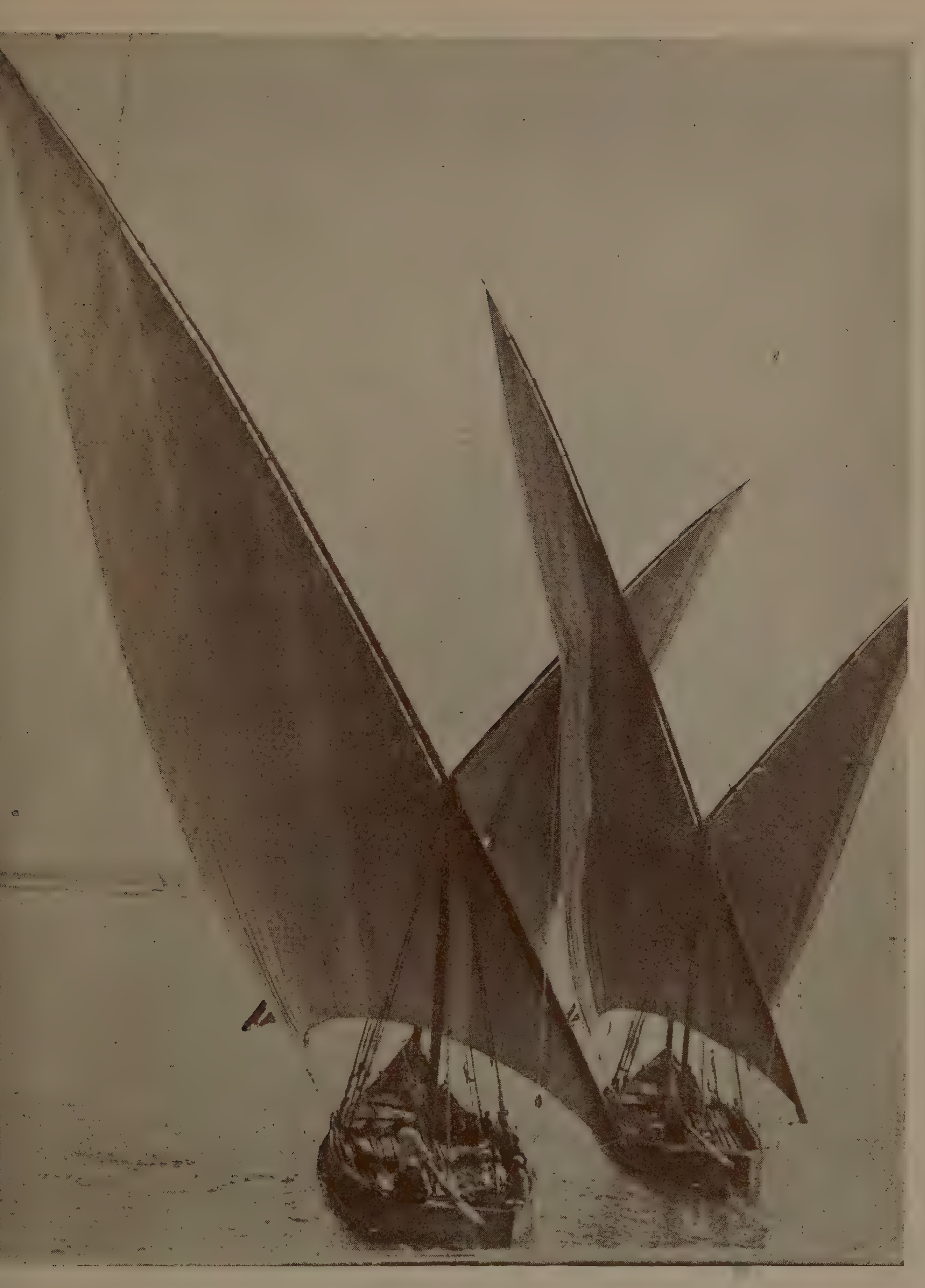
Somehow I was first drawn irresistibly toward the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which is supposed to mark the spot where Christ was crucified. With a candle I went into the crypt and on my knees touched the hole were stood the Cross that has radiated its

light through the ages. This was one place in Jerusalem that commanded the complete reverence of Mark Twain in years agone. Wandering back, I passed through the Via Dolorosa and stopped by the way at Five Stations of the Cross. With me was the never-ending procession of pilgrims from all parts of the world. On all sides merchants were sitting grimly squat-fashion in their cave-like shops, and Moslems were kneeling and facing Mecca here and there by the wayside.

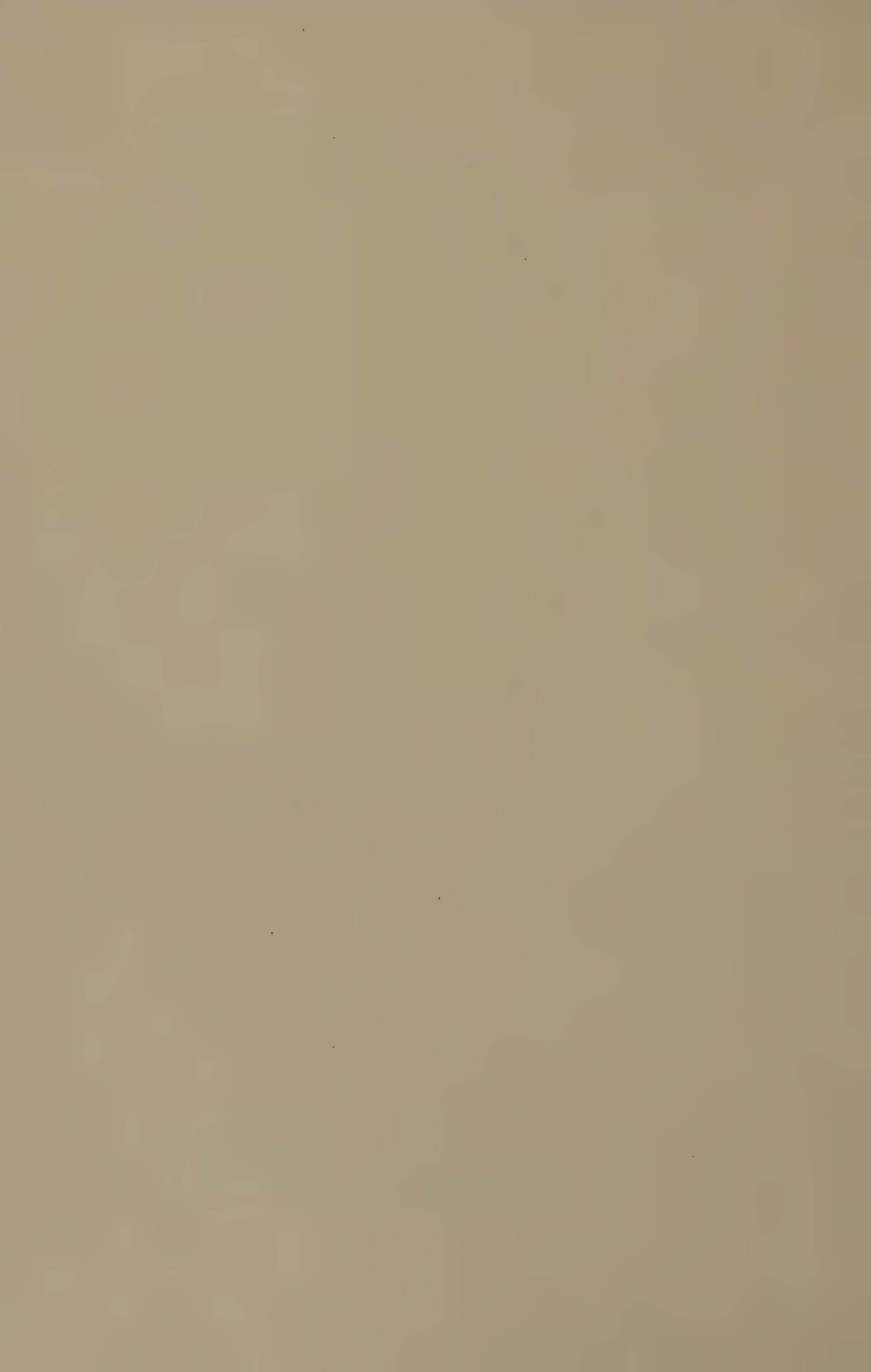
The ring of the hammer on the anvil came to me as I passed through a narrow street, and a moment later I looked in upon an old-time smithy and gunshop combined—and here shone the heirloom blades of Damascus steel. Not far off was a grist mill, handling the kernels in small measures, with women and children huddled together awaiting their meal, continuing the same methods that have been in vogue for centuries past, except that there was an electric motor to turn the wheels. Indescribable filth and mingled offensive odors emanated from the grotto-like streets in which the activities of the city were huddled.

A sharp turn from the tiny flour mill brought me to the house of the rich man from whom Lazarus begged the crumbs of bread. The house bridges the street near the site of the shop where the merchant jeered at the Master as He was passing bearing His cross on the way to Calvary. For punishment he was condemned to continue life on earth until the second coming of the Messiah. It was he who became the "Wandering Jew," and his experiences, as portrayed by Eugene Sue, foreshadowed the fate of his people wandering among the nations of the earth.

Some of the streets in old Jerusalem have never had



Nile boats, Soudan



a touch of sunlight since they were built. Successive flights of stairs, called streets, lead down into seething, crooked, dark passages lined with cavern-like shops. On either side are the inevitable bakeshops, displaying all sorts of pancakes, with a blacksmith shop, a carpenter's shop, a shoe shop and the corner grocery store —all intermingled like a jumbled department store.

Inside the tiny crevices that rent for business quarters, all kinds of food and sweets were in evidence. Hawkers were shouting out their praises of a small array of gaudy apparel. To the inhabitants of the East it may have been a gay scene, but to me, with my western point of view, it was rather melancholy. The sad faces of the people, who seem to cling to the old niches and unwholesome habitations in the city of Jerusalem, are a haunting memory. They are as fond of these surroundings as we of the Western World are of our pretty apartments, boulevard mansions, or cozy bungalows. Home is home to them, as it is to us, be it ever so humble.

I was aroused from my soliloquy of Oriental conditions by strange, weird sounds, produced in a minor key, without one note seemingly related to another. In the distance was the Wailing Wall, where the children of Israel gather every Friday to bemoan the destruction of their holy temple and to supplicate the Creator's aid in restoring it to them. This weird and mournful chanting calls to mind the unceasing expiation of the Israelite, who through long centuries has striven and fought for the restoration that may soon become a reality. Nevertheless, one American Jew I met was far from willing to remain in the Holy Land. He was praying, he told me in East Side dialect, to get back to America.

"Bring me back to dear old New York and I'll never complain of anything again—and will pay my taxes in advance."

Making my way to the thirty-five acres of the Temple Area, where the Mosque of the Dome covers the site of King Solomon's Temple, I entered a Mohammedan house of worship. The mosque is said to have been built over the cornerstone of King Solomon's Temple. Removing my shoes, I entered without being held up for a password. The guide seemed embarrassed as I marched bravely into the silent temple in my bright yellow socks. On my next visit to a mosque I took care to see I had a pair of slippers in which I could hide the hole in my socks and save myself the ignominy of displaying my fancy Princeton orange-hued hose without the spirit of the tiger.

In this mosque, covering the temple destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and rebuilt when the Jews returned from their captivity in Babylon, I looked upon the jewels and gold overhead in the dome. The gold was so bright that it had to be dulled with green. The original temple of Solomon was not so massive as I had thought in my Masonic dreams and study plans. There was an outer gate with its Hernius in this first conception of a fraternal organization. The dimensions given me were sixty-six feet by one hundred and thirty-three—not large at all when compared with some of our more modern houses of worship.

On the Sacrificial Altar, where Abraham is said to have stood ready to offer his son Isaac, I felt cold shivers as they pointed out the place where the blood of sacrificial lambs flowed for ages. There was a crypt under the rock in which I met some sturdy Mohammedan boys from Jaffa carrying their shoes upon their

backs. They had come to pray here in the darkness and silence of the historic shrine, but they did not forget to pass the contribution box for themselves—and asked for "baksheesh."

A reminder of the Kaiser's visit to Palestine is revealed in the German Wilhelm Kirk. The Sultan of Turkey, then ruler of the Holy Land, spent over five hundred thousand dollars to see that the Imperial Wilhelm had a royal good time. The emperor requested the famous Golden Gate, which had been walled up for many hundreds of years, to be opened for him—but this was refused. For the first time, perhaps, the emperor realized there were some things even a Hohenzollern couldn't have.

* * *

Time is a matter of confusion for the foreign visitor in the Holy Land. The Moslem day begins at sunset when a white thread can still be determined from a black thread. Each point in the progress of the day is the reverse of our own. At six in the morning the Mohammedan observes the noon hour. Added to the Moslem time, and the time of the Jew and the Christian, is the so-called Mecca time. Every mosque visited had a large, old-time "grandfather" clock, which seemed modern in these ancient surroundings. It gives the prayer time in the Holy City of Mecca.

Religious pilgrims from all parts of the world are a familiar sight in Jerusalem at all seasons. The high tide is reached when Eastern time shows the early flowers a-bloom. Here I saw a group of Russian women with their high-top boots and long skirts. They had tramped many weary miles. They carried rugs, which provide their only covering for the night's lodging under the great blue dome of the heavens.

The temple area is paved with large stones, with here and there a cypress or olive tree, the only living relics of the historic centuries. On one side still stand the high walls of the city and the turreted battlements which once resisted the battering rams of invading armies. Over the parapets of those walls I looked down upon a scene, the memory of which will ever abide with me. Before me was spread out the age-old Valley of Jehoshaphat, with its millions of unnamed and unnumbered tombs where the children of Israel lie buried. From time immemorial it has been the dream of the Jews in every part of the world to have their remains placed within this sacred valley. For thousands of years the rains have washed down those sloping banks and mingled the dust of the people of Abraham's time with that of the modern pilgrims who have journeyed to Jerusalem. In their declining years these Jewish pilgrims cherish a longing to have their dust cradled with that of their fathers in this great area of God's Acres.

At high noon the weird, high-pitched chanting of the muezzin, the "Man in the Tower," called the faithful followers of the teachings of Mohammed to prayer.

There are no bells in the Mohammedan mosques. Music, too, is banished. It is a tenet of the Moslem faith that the human voice is the only means by which the people shall be called to worship. In answer to its sing-song chanting, they flock across the great sacred area to the Mosque of Omar.

To quote from Moore's "Paradise and the Peri":

"But hark the vesper call to prayer,
As slow the orb of daylight sets
Is rising sweetly on the air
From Syria's thousand minarets."

Women, however, are taboo. They have no souls, according to the teachings of the prophet, and are never permitted to enter the mosques.

Inside the Places of the Area were a motley collection of Mohammedans of both sexes and of every estate. There were men in flowing robes, and silent, veiled women. There were children and old folks, haggard widows in their weeds, and sheiks in their flowing gay attire. All appeared devout as they touched the ground with their heads and prostrated themselves in their humility before their Maker.

Near the valley of Jehoshaphat I had some honey served me by one of the long-bearded reverent-looking street venders who was singing out his wares in a high-pitched voice. The honey had the scent of orange blossoms, suggestive of June-time weddings, mingled with the aroma of the white blossoms adorning the trees in the valley of Jehoshaphat.

In the near distance is the Mount of Olives, where the Lord's Prayer was first given to the world from the lips of Christ. From the top of the Moslem mosque to which we had climbed, we repeated this prayer, known to all creeds and races. The Mount is one of the few places authoritatively associated with Christ.

* * *

Old Jerusalem itself, at first disappointing, has a lure that grew day by day upon the visitor. It is difficult to imagine the glory of King Solomon's times at first glance, although below the Mosque of Omar are pointed out the stables in which were kept in readiness for the royal pageants the King's "hundreds of horses." These stables later provided quarters for the gaily caparisoned chargers of the Crusaders.

In the Pool of Bethesda below, pilgrims were washing their feet and sponging their bodies, preparing themselves to enter the holy portals of the Temple. The pool is fed by an iron pipe which brings the water down from the historic River Jordan to Jerusalem and still symbolizes the Waters of Life to the pilgrim.

Inside the wall I had some sort of a lunch at what might be called a "one-arm joint." A queer place it was. The stove consisted of a slab of stone with holes in the top and on the side. Charcoal burning on the inside furnished the heat. On this stove was prepared a stack of Oriental "griddle cakes." There was also a mysterious mixture that reminded me of chop suey. It wasn't half bad, but I couldn't dine with any comfort because of the cramped position in which I sat—cross-legged fashion—for the stools in this oriental version of a Child's Lunch Room were scarcely a foot high, and there was no counter or place to file away the spoons and the chop sticks. Imagine a fat man eating with his knees on a level with his mouth! No wonder syrup adorns the vests of the patrons of this oriental "self-service" emporium.

Passing down the street, a merchant tailor tried to inveigle me into his shop, complimenting the lines of my graceful form. He measures his customer right on the street, and does his sewing with a tiny hand-run sewing machine. Next door a shoemaker was cutting rubber soles out of old discarded tires. Further along tinsmiths were making pots and pans out of old oil cans.

The "garbage scow fleet" of New York contains enough material dumped into the sea to supply old Jerusalem with material to keep thousands at their work from sunrise to sunset.

Confidence and mutual reliance, characteristic of American business, was lacking. The shopper here has to follow the old Roman legal maxim of *caveat emptor*, "let the buyer beware." He insists on seeing what he buys. Flour for the bread he eats must be ground before the eyes of the purchaser. But what of that? There is a story told about lead pencils that were shipped into the Orient from the Occident only tipped with lead—a swindle not forgotten by Orientals.

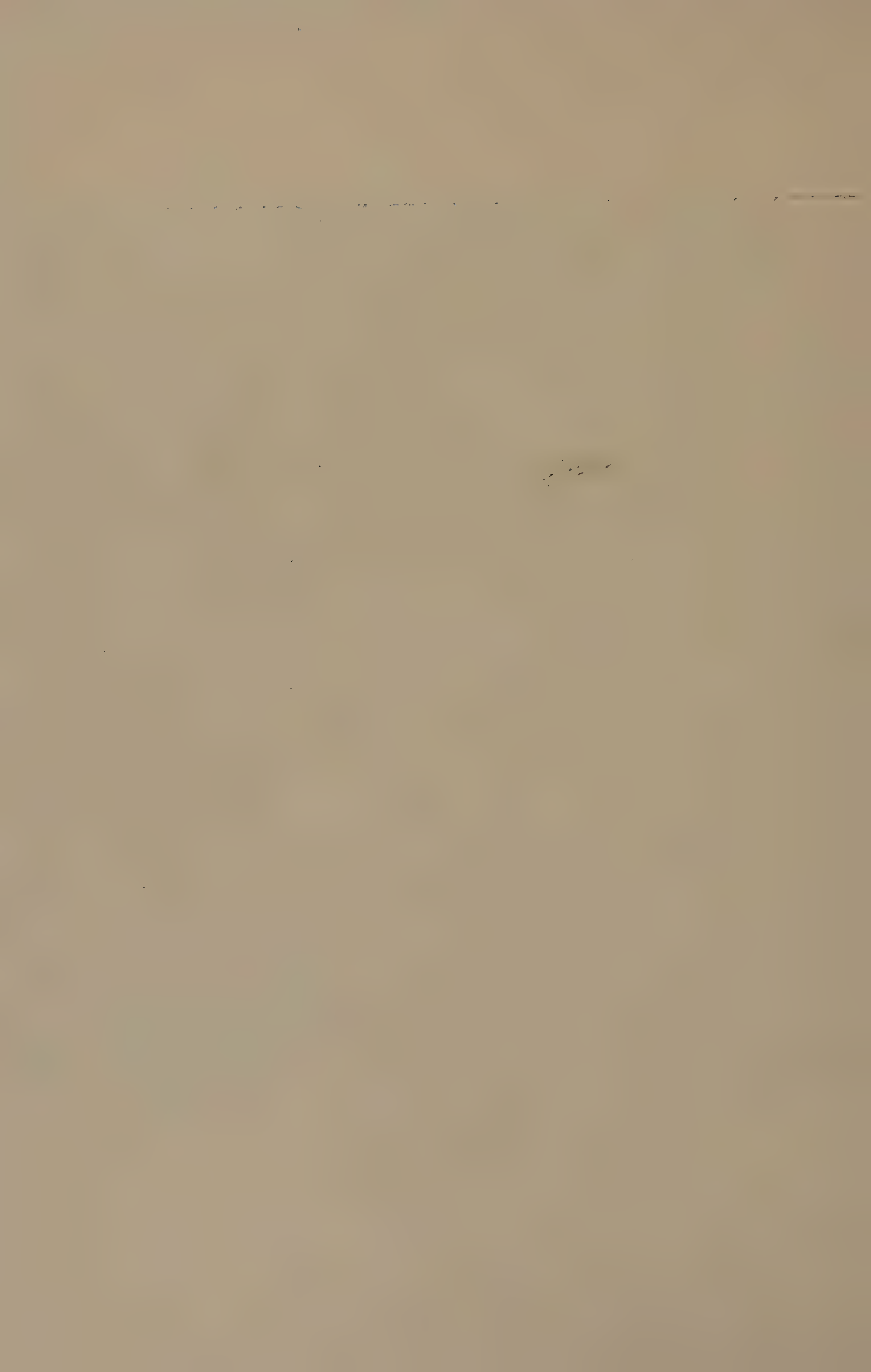
There is scarcely any wood in Jerusalem, and any sort of fuel brings a high price. Fuel vendors with their donkey-loads of twigs and branches make every little twig count, for fuel is sold by weight. Most of this comes from the olive trees, and is, in fact, the only dependable source of heat. Even this is so scarce that the women knead their bread at home and carry it to the public ovens where the baker takes his toll in the staff of life.

Coming upon an olive mill near the Pool of Hezekiah, I watched the ancient process of converting the fruit into oil. There a large man trampled over the mushy mixture in the trough with his bare feet. He drew the oil into a basin from which he poured it through a strainer and then into pots ready for shipment. The olive is the standard product of the Holy Land. The Palestinians use a great deal of oil and spread it on most of their foods. They need an abundant supply of it, for olive oil in the Near East parallels our own paramount problem of bread and butter.





Nileometer (measurer of inundations) on the Island of the First Cataract of the Nile River, Soudan



CHAPTER XI

The Dream of Crusaders came true when the Cross supplanted the Crescent in the Holy Land

XXVI

Oh, come with old Khayyám, and leave the Wise
To talk; one thing is certain, that Life flies;
  One thing is certain, and the Rest is Lies;
The Flower that once has blown forever dies.

XXVII

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great Argument
  About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same Door as in I went.

XXVIII

With them the Seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with my own hand labour'd it to grow:
  And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd—
"I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

CHAPTER XI

NEAR the town of David I met a black Abyssinian, who had come from far-off Africa, but had also lived in the United States. He was ambling slowly along, following in the wake of pilgrims who had just returned from the River Jordan, where they had been baptized. He was chanting one of the old negro songs of plantation days. I accosted him, and he responded, "Boss, I'm a rollin' stone from down in Mobile, could you assist a fellow American with a good dollar as a souvenir?" With a smile showing his teeth, he hummed a little stronger, and, after he pocketed a silver quarter, with a glance at the eagle side, remarked, "That's tails."

Trudging behind the pilgrims on to the Tombs of the Kings on the outskirts of the city, I inspected the old graves hewn out of solid rock and barricaded by large stones, resembling in shape the pyramids and obelisks of Egypt. Altogether Jerusalem is chiefly a city of the dead, as the principal points of interest seem to be its cemeteries, always ready for the sight-seeing tourist bus. Close to the Garden of Gethsemane I found the Mohammedan cemetery which includes the Place of the Skull, which General Gordon located as the real site of Calvary. The spot he selected as the one where stood the Cross of Jesus is surrounded by a wall, where, during the Turkish regime, Christians were not allowed to enter. In this grotto, with its gloom and chill, is the place where Jeremiah is supposed to have written his lamentations, amid appropriate surroundings.

At Saint Stephen's Gate, where the first martyr was stoned, we bared our heads. There were several "Copts" or Christians here who demonstrated for our benefit the manner in which the ancients hurled the fatal stones. We kept a good distance off, as they fired their "sling-shots."

Every sort of a religious service seems to be going on every hour of the day in the Holy City. There were the Salvation Army, Methodists, Catholics, Greek, Roman and Russian Churches, Moslems and Jews. In Jerusalem people pray in every language on earth. Pilgrims walking with staff in hand stopped every now and then to kiss the very stones in the road over which they believed Jesus may have trod.

The Stone of Unction where the Virgin Mary stood has been almost worn away by the thousands and thousands of lips that have touched it during the centuries.

The Temple of Jerusalem is the world's only department store of religion on a new co-operative, as well as the old competitive basis. There, all creeds look upwards toward the same heavens with the exception of the Moslems, who pray facing Mecca.

In the Greek Church there is a life-size image of the Virgin, literally covered with costly jewels. The statue is made of wax and is richly adorned. In the center of the forehead an oval pearl of lustrous hue sparkles, and on the fingers are rings set with diamonds, sapphires, and rubies.

The subterranean passages of Jerusalem, where the children of Israel hid themselves when the plundering invaders arrived, seemed musty and dank. These dark passages showed ingenuity in subway construction, with just a suggestion of the mole-like main traffic lines of New York.



A Sword-Maker's Shop in Damascus. In such tiny wayside shops as this have been fashioned the famed Damascus blades for hundreds of years



While drinking something called "fruit juice," I met a Zionist hailing from London. He had several relatives in New York and Chicago, and as we chatted he told of his work in the many colonies that his organization has built up.

"The Jews are coming here from all over the world and they have only begun to arrive," he told me. "Up to the time of the Armistice, in 1918, the Jews were not allowed to remain in the Holy Land. They might make a short visit, but if they overstayed, the consul representing their country was notified by the Turkish authorities to tell them to move on. It was the American consul who broke this custom and refused to inform several Jewish men and women from America that they were no longer desired. He declared that it was against the law and custom of the nation he represented. After that other consuls fell into line. Now the Jewish people make up nearly one-half the population of Jerusalem and conduct much of its business. The Jews here speak several languages, although Hebrew is now one of the three official tongues—Hebrew, English and Arabic—and has already to some degree superseded the others. The difference between the Hebrew, the Yiddish and the Jewish language is very distinct."

Most of the meat in Jerusalem eaten by Mohammedans and Christians is kosher Jewish meat. The Jews maintain the only important abattoirs in the city and gladly slaughter the animals of their Christian and Moslem neighbors in order that they may be sure of having only strictly kosher food for themselves.

My Jewish friend conducted me to the top of a new dwelling on the outskirts of the city. From here I gazed over the housetops of which one reads in Holy

Writ. That afternoon there seemed to be something of a deep solemnity overhanging the city, in the panorama spread out below. The old Tower of David, built ages before the time of Christ, stood like a sentinel, and the domes of mosques mingled with the spires of churches. In the far distance in one direction was the great wilderness, never conquered. In the foreground was the house where Pontius Pilate lived at the time of the trial. In another direction was the harvest field where an American reaper was laying low the golden grain and I could see the men in the fields. Close by, Arabs were plowing up the land with rude, rustic plows drawn by camels. They insist the horses walk too fast and that camels are more adapted to their pace.

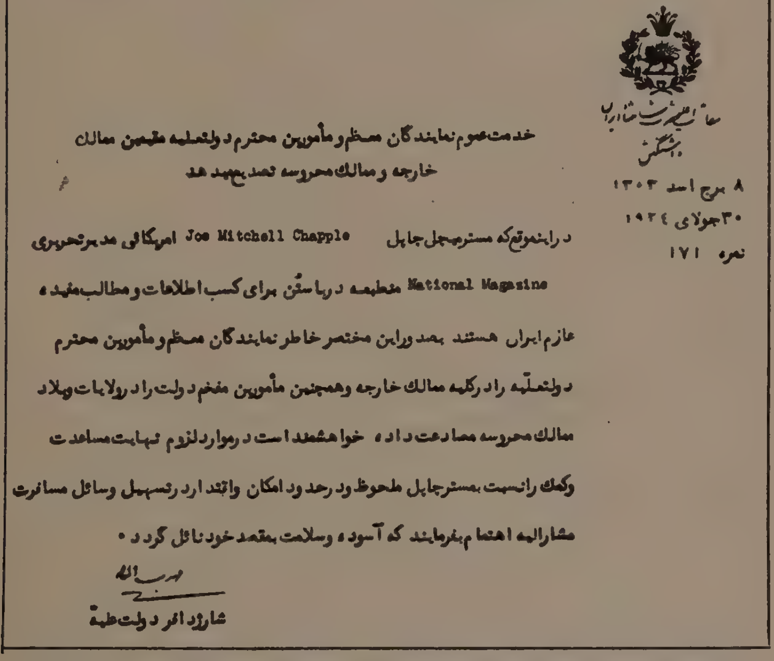
Beyond and all about were the hills of Judea, for Jerusalem is built upon a plateau and the side hills. The climate is similar to that of Washington, D. C., and they have to watch out for unexpected "Inauguration day" blizzards in March. A few years ago they had a real American Christmas with plenty of snow—but no Christmas trees.

Jerusalem has been on the boom and is increasing in population. The newer dwellings of yellow limestone are more comfortable and cheerful than the older houses. In some respects they could be said to resemble the colorful Spanish homes of Florida.

* * *

In Jerusalem the work of Nathan Strauss, the eminent American philanthropist, is evident. There are several of his so-called soup kitchens in various parts of the city. Although visitors call them by that name, they are in reality relief stations where the general health as well as the food supply of the needy of the

Holy Land are provided for. No one now goes hungry in the Holy City. About seventeen hundred people are fed and looked after every day in these havens endowed with the funds received from the rentals of a half-million-dollar building in New York City. Three times Mr. Strauss has visited Jerusalem and Palestine.



۸ برج اسد ۱۳۰۳
۳۰ جولای ۱۹۲۴
نمره ۱۷۱

خدمت عموم نمایندگان معظم و مأمورین محترم دولت علیه مقیمین ممالک
خارجه و ممالک محروسه تصدیع میدهد

در اینموقع که مستر میچل چاپل Joe Mitchell Chapple امریکائی مدیر تحریری
مطبعه National Magazine در یاستن برای کسب اطلاعات و مطالب مفیده
عازم ایران هستند بصدور این مختصر خاطر نمایندگان معظم و مأمورین محترم
دولت علیه را در کلیه ممالک خارجه و همچنین مأمورین مفخم دولت را در ولایات و بلاد
ممالک محروسه مصادعت داده خواهشمند است در موارد لزوم نهایت مساعدت
و کمک را نسبت بمستر چاپل ملحوظ و در حدود امکان و اقتدار در تسهیل وسائل مسافرت
مشارالیه اهتمام بفرمایند که آسوده و سلامت بمقصد خود نائل گردد.

شارژدافر دولت علیه

Mr. Chapple's Letter of Credentials from the Egyptian Foreign Office

On his latest visit he made a careful inspection of the strictly non-sectarian, and non-racial relief stations established through the warmth of feeling and generosity of his great American heart. The appreciation shown him by the poor of Palestine and Jerusalem is most gratifying to his countrymen.

Long years ago Nathan Strauss believed that Jerusalem would some day become the great religious

educational center of the world. Almost every modern religion in some way has a contact in the Holy City. Some of the dreams of this devout man have been realized in the Hadassah School of Nurses. The University of Palestine is already functioning in various parts of Jerusalem and the Holy Land, and work has already begun upon buildings which will soon be ready for occupancy.

A thoroughly competent faculty of Jewish and Christian professors from all parts of the world have volunteered their services to the new institution. Professor Einstein, of "Relativity" fame, was one of the first to enlist and will be an important member of the teaching staff.

From the humble beginning initiated here in Jerusalem it is hoped will come the dawn of a new era of permanent world peace. There is nothing so conducive to international amity and peace as intelligent religious education. Wars in the past have too often resulted from the conflicts of religion. Permanent peace necessitates a mutual understanding and coordination of religious faiths. There is nothing so likely to bring about this sympathetic toleration as a jointly administered university with biblical study a component part of the curriculum. Such study can be carried on to good advantage in Jerusalem—a fitting place for international friendship to crystallize. Jerusalem still remains a source and center of the religions of the world.

A trip to Jerusalem would not be complete without visiting a Jewish "Shool," or synagogue. Here I found that the Hebrews, like the Mohammedans, permit nothing but the human voice to be heard in their houses of worship. The tolling of bells, or music of any kind,

other than the age-old chants of the choir, is banned. Devout old men, dressed in their white robes and black, tight-fitting skull caps, rocked themselves back and forth in their holy fervor, now and then kissing the hem of their garments, or tapping themselves on the chest with their doubled fists. Everyone prays aloud, and stands up during the greater part of the service. It is an impressive sight when the cupboard in which the Torah or Holy Scroll is kept, is unveiled, and the sacred sheepskin scroll withdrawn. It is wound on ornately carved rolls, the ends of which project through the holes in the top of its cloth covering. These wooden projections or knobs are of large size and covered with jewels. It is raised reverently high in the air that all might see it. From all parts of the synagogue the members of the congregation make their way to kiss its holy, embroidered covering. There was more respect and veneration shown to that parchment than I had ever before seen given to an inanimate object. The service, conducted in the ancient Hebrew, came to a close in the usual way, with a prayer for the restoration of Palestine. This prayer is a feature of the Jewish religious service in every part of the world. Long as the Jews have been alienated from the Holy Land, they have kept up their hope of some day rebuilding the Temple and returning to their former homeland.

At sunset when the first star appears the Jewish day begins. Our Saturday is the Jewish Sabbath, and it is also the holy day of the Moslems. The Jews desist from their labors and business from Friday evening until Saturday night. Consequently, business in Jerusalem is a sort of continuous performance. Some of the booths are closed on Saturday, some on Sunday—but Monday morning Jew, Christian, and Mohammedan

and all the Gentiles are back on the job trying to make up for the time spent in devotions.

On my return to the hotel I could see the pools of Saloam which furnish the water supply for the city of Jerusalem. These pools are ancient in name, but recent in construction. Many such modern construction schemes have been undertaken. There is already a plan afoot to dam the waters of the Jordan and develop water power as the river passes on its way from Galilee to the depths of the Dead Sea, which may make electric light as common and cheap as at Niagara Falls, and fulfill the first command in Genesis—

"Let there be light!"

When I finally reached the Allenby Hotel I was as tired as any of the other fellow-pilgrims from far-off lands. Out of my window I looked upon the evening star, signalling like the Almighty message of the Star of Bethlehem two thousand years ago.

The gorgeous galaxy of the Milky Way was as a lighted boulevard from Jerusalem, the Golden, and the jeweled throne of God.

CHAPTER XII

Going "Down to Egypt" on an Excursion Ticket

XXIX

Into this Universe, and *why* not knowing,
Nor *whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not *whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

XXX

What, without asking, hither hurried *whence?*
And, without asking, *whither* hurried hence!
Another and another Cup to drown
The Memory of this Impertinence!

XXXI

Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate,
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate,
And many Knots unravel'd by the Road;
But not the Knot of Human Death and Fate.

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

CHAPTER XII

LIKE Napoleon and the later phalanx of travelers on pleasure or conquest bent, I entered Egypt through the ancient port of Alexandria. My first glimpse of the land of the Pharaohs reminded me of Coney Island. There was a stretch of sand void of trees or vegetation. Then came a row of flat-roofed houses. Behind it all the deep blue of the Nile—a typical Maxfield Parrish or Guerin color, recalling also the illustrations usually accompanying the Mediterranean Cruise folders and posters. Back of the sand bar were the salt works, which have probably been in operation since the time of Moses.

With balmy breezes sweeping the Mediterranean, Alexandria has been a seaside resort since long before the time of Marc Antony. It is the summer capital of Egypt, as all of the officials reside and transact official business here six months of the year. Contrary to the popular belief, Alexander neither founded nor destroyed St. John's library at Alexandria. His lifetime was all too short for the vast amount of work put into it and he killed himself at Babylon at the age of thirty-three. He had as little to do with that ancient library as had Andrew Carnegie. The destruction of this storehouse of history blotted out a chronicle of events which is now only suggested by excavations.

The library was founded by Ptolemy V, ancestor of Cleopatra; its librarian being a learned monk named Manitho, who collated all that was known of the history of Egypt from the earliest times. It was partly destroyed by accident in the clash between the armies

of Caesar and Pompey and contained 440,000 manuscripts at the time when it was totally destroyed by the Saracens in the fourth century.

This sacking and pillage of Alexandria at the time when it was one of the greatest centers of ancient learning is the outstanding crime of all vandals.

It was at Rosetta fortunately that the Rosetta stone was discovered. On one side it had an inscription in hieroglyphics and on the other the great translation. Without this key it is doubtful if the picture writing of Egypt would have ever been solved. The stone is preserved in the British Museum.

The harbor, filled with shipping from all parts of the world, indicated that Alexandria is a port of call for vessels passing through the Suez Canal. A variety of flags fluttered in the breeze from the mastheads. The Union Jack snapped beside the flag of France and the Egyptian standard—a field of green emblematic of the Nile and Mecca, which, with its crescent and three stars, was the dominant ensign that day.

On our ship were a number of British officers returning to their posts in Egypt and the Far and Near East, after a holiday in England. During the long years away from home they dream of the time when they will return to the tight little Isle for a life of leisure well earned and live the life of a country gentleman.

The British Colonial officer is a class unto himself. British among the British, he would go without eating if not properly dressed for dinner; he "has his tub," eats marmalade with his tea; smokes an evil-smelling pipe, and will not swerve a jot or tittle from his Scotch and soda or English traditions. The puggaree helmet he carries with his luggage serves to identify him. Looking forward to "the compensation" he is supposed to

receive in 1927, when the British officials retire from Egypt, he faces the future complacently.

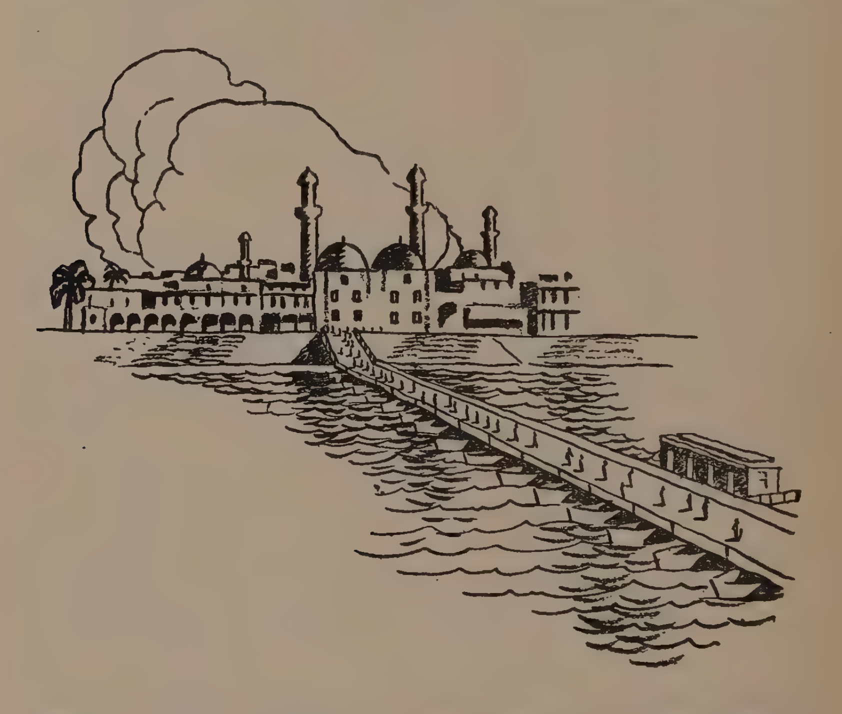
There was a confusion of languages and an apparent aimless running to and fro in the process of landing, which was then in charge of the Egyptian officials. The steadying influence of the British protector seemed to be lacking.

A fellow-passenger on the steamer was Jehia Ibrahim Pasha, a former Prime Minister of Egypt. A slender, serious-looking man, with a brown mustache, he resembled in appearance our own Elihu Root. A judge of the Egyptian higher courts for many years, he is famed for his erudite decisions. Considered somewhat old fashioned by the Nationalist element of the country, led by the students, he was retired because of his conservatism. In conversation he did not refer to his former exalted position or to the troubled affairs of the nation, except to comment smilingly: "I was dismissed." He manifested a great interest in Chief Justice Taft, to whom he referred as "a brother jurist." He considered Harding and Coolidge as examples of the cool-headed leadership required in the world in these times. Speaking of the attitude of his people toward the great American leaders:

"We always remember," he said, "the time when Theodore Roosevelt was in Egypt and gathered impressions and information that led to the speech in England that awakened sleeping statesmen with a jolt. That was the beginning of the revival of memory concerning Egyptian rights under the treaty of 1882—not forgotten after the World War."

Friends and supporters came to greet the former Prime Minister. Coming aboard ship, they advanced and kissed his hand, while opposing Nationalists looked

on with respect, for Jehia Pasha was counted one of the level-headed and firm-minded leaders by the opposition. His former Secretary of Agriculture, Medames, who was the "Copt" or Christian representative in his Cabinet, was with him, a stalwart real "dirt"



farmer, wide between the eyes, with the strong hands and jaw of a John L. Sullivan.

In the historic palace of the Khedive, the anniversary of the ascension of King Fuad was to be commemorated that day. Alexandria expended $40,000 for decorations and illuminations in honor of their king. Already the boulevards began to take on the holiday dress of Luna Park. Gardens, squares and quays were ablaze with Egyptian flags and banners reading: "Long live King Fuad." The municipal

buildings were festooned with lights. Near the French Consulate, for the French influence of Suez days is still reflected in Egypt, a marquee had been constructed for the reception of the visitors. Four kiosks for music and an equal number of temporary but artistic triumphal arches recalled the splendor of the World's Fair in St. Louis, and the Conference for the Limitation of Armament held at Washington in 1921. Private business houses and residences of the city were draped in what seemed to an American a radiant Fourth of July regalia. Even the red lemonade of circus fame was not lacking.

The development of Alexandria under British stimulation has greatly enhanced the value of the sandy beach which, until the English took control, had remained a waste under the shadow of Cleopatra's monument. The development of the crescent boulevard, together with the demand for lots beside it, boosted the price of land, like a Florida boom, to such an extent that the U. S. A. felt unable to purchase land for a consulate "within the appropriation."

* * *

Holiday crowds are much the same the world over, but in Egypt the merriment of the American crowds and mobilized good nature was woefully lacking. Vendors of sweets and drinks were moving slowly among the crowds with their large brass pots, singing out the virtues of "Eat, drink, and be merry." The fast moving Spanish game, "Jailai" was being played, to give money a chance to change hands, as in the old racing days at Sheepshead Bay. Everyone was looking for a thrill on this carnival day in old Alexandria.

Sheiks and "fellaheen," or farmers, arrived to make a

real visit with the king and his officials during their summer outing. The royal reception was held in the former palace of the Khedive, built at the time of the opening of the Suez Canal, when Verdi, the Italian composer, was paid a prize of $75,000 by the ruler to write an opera commemorating the historical traditions of Egypt. The result was "Aida," which has immortalized Egypt in operatic classics.

Carriages and automobiles moved toward the grounds of the palace through the din and squalor of the city streets. Vistas of Oriental balconies made it seem like an opera setting. At Heliopolis there was a sharp contrast to the scenes left behind. Gone was the darkness of alley and by-way, and in its place was the blaze of royal splendor. Bands played while regiments of Egyptian soldiers in picturesque uniforms and queer, tall, red fezzes paraded the spacious palace grounds. At intervals the soldiers about the palace would lift their voices in chanting praise of their ruler, while the cry "Long live the King!" echoed and re-echoed through the palace grounds when the bands stopped playing. As we came upon the scene, the leader, recognizing us as Americans, broke into the chorus of rag-time jazzy "blues."

In the great reception room behind the elaborate iron grill work partition, the King and Queen received their guests, who gathered on an enormous and luxurious red rug. The diplomats, representing many nations, were there in a gorgeous array of uniforms and medals.

After the guests inscribed their names on a register made of vellum, one of my Egyptian companions said: "Now the king will know who are his friends." Coffee was served as the line proceeded from room to room.

Before advancing to the royal presence on this hot, sultry day, the guests washed their hands and bathed their faces in scented water, and the reception room was filled with the mingled odors of "Araby the Blest," and reminded the American visitor of a highly seasoned beauty shop on Broadway. In company with the brother of the queen, I made my way to the royal presence and paid my respects with the best French bow I could make. Sebrey Pasha, my escort, spoke English fluently, having studied at the English universities, and explained the various ceremonies to me, some of which originated with the Pharaohs.

The English occupation of Egypt seemed to be the prevailing topic of conversation. Every now and then, from those who could speak English, I heard a low, murmured appeal and protest for the immediate removal of the British soldiers. The presence of the Tommies especially irritated the students, who want to see their own soldiers on duty, guarding the peace of the Nile, or none at all.

There were concerts and social affairs going on in every part of the city during the evening, although the reception at the magnificent royal palace was the centre of attraction. All Alexandria's four hundred had turned out in gala array, and every conceivable sort of vehicle was parked on the palace grounds.

The king had previously held a reception at the marquee which had been constructed for the purpose, where he was formally received by the Ministers and the Ward committee. Here the latter took an oath, renewing an allegiance to the new nation and the new king, under the green flag of three stars and a crescent.

The American consul insisted that it was the most elaborate celebration Alexandria had witnessed for

years, a reflection of the magnificence of the gala days of the early kings. An elaborate set of traffic regulations and a special traffic squad was on duty, controlling the surging throngs. Visitors were shown every courtesy by the native police and everyone seemed happy.

Even Joseph Rosenthal, the socialist leader who had been officially banished from the country, was "among those present," because the government had not yet found a place to send "the man without a country," a lost sheep who had strayed from the fold of the political parties and has not been able to re-locate himself in the face of the impending political upheavals.

"I feel something like your LaFollette of 1924, but my day will come," he said to my companion while sipping his coffee at a cafe.

The clouds were then gathering on the Nile. Turkish influence after long years of control in Egypt is still felt. Kemel Pasha is remembered by the large Turkish population in Egypt as the one leader who made England sit up and take notice. The prevalent atmosphere of Egypt was charged with suspicion. At a banquet the doors were guarded—and no one was willing to sit with his back to the window. The cloudburst came when Sir Lee Stack, Sirdar of the Sudan, was assassinated and Britain retaliated by demanding an indemnity of two and one-half millions. Newspaper readers all over the world were astounded at the rapidity with which the payment was made. Less than a week had passed before Egypt declared it was ready to turn the money over to the English authorities. Zaghoul, the veteran patriot and Egyptian Premier, resigned. Many people felt confirmed in their belief that assassination and other equally dark



The house of Simon the Tanner, in Joppa where the Apostle Peter tarried for many days. Here he went up on the housetop to pray, and had a vision; and here the servants of Cornelius the centurion came in search of him and took him on the morrow to the house of Cornelius in Caesarea. "And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him"



and devious Oriental methods of procedure were being discussed by the radicals. It was common talk that the sum paid over was a part of a fund which had been created for just such contingencies. Else, they argued, how was the new nation able to deliver the large spot sum demanded in so short a time?

* * *

Few people realized that Egypt was in an unusually sound financial condition as a result of the long continued British occupancy and the country's financial policy. A country practically without either debts or taxes, the revenues of Egypt are sufficient to take care of the budget and provide the necessary compensation that had been arranged for the retiring of British officials. The absence of heavy tax levies on land is a fact that operated to enhance land values. The position of the students at the time seemed to be—anything to get rid of the British troops. "They are as offensive as the Red Coats were to the American farmers at Lexington in 1775," commented a young Egyptian who had attended school in America.

Egyptians whom I met were far from unanimous in desiring the withdrawal of English officials. The more conservative of the business element felt that it was a mistake to drive the British out of Egypt. The currency, raised to a high standard, carried the endorsement of the Bank of England. Egyptians were enjoying a general prosperity extending even to the farmers, that had been unknown in the country since the days of the Ptolemes.

Then came the grim spectre of over-reaching ambition. The old impulse of conquest prevailed in Egypt and they could not resist claiming the Sudan. English statecraft thought much but said nothing.

That evening I took a train for Cairo. When I entered the sleeper to retire a few hours before leaving time, I thought that I was back in New York, taking the "Owl" express and that I would waken in the morning to find myself in Boston. But Pullman porters were not in evidence.

The bed linen was far from inviting. It had evidently been laundered with water that had been used several times, and left an odor which was stifling. Then I understood why everyone in Egypt carries perfume. After an eau de cologne shower I passed off to sweet dreams, while being whirled over the rails up the Nile to Cairo.

CHAPTER XIII

In the Streets of Cairo, where Pharaohs in Mummies recall the "Pomp and Circumstance" of Ancient Days

XXXII

There was a Door to which I found no Key:
There was a Veil past which I could not see:
Some little Talk awhile of *Me* and *Thee*
There seem'd—and then no more of *Thee* and *Me*.

XXXIII

Then to the rolling Heav'n itself I cried,
Asking, "What Lamp had Destiny to guide
Her little Children stumbling in the Dark?"
And—"A blind Understanding!" Heav'n replied.

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*



"Main Street," Damascus. "The Street Called Straight," which is mentioned in Holy Writ and has been on the map since the time of Abraham



CHAPTER XIII

AWAKENING in Cairo, Egypt, at early dawn, I listened for the far-famed music of the "Streets of Cairo," amid the hissing steam of the locomotives in the railroad terminal. Memories of the exhibit at the World's Fair at Chicago foreshadowing popular interest in the Orient were recalled when I rubbed my eyes and realized that I was about to enter the real thoroughfares of the place. The capital of Egypt remains the cosmopolitan melting pot of the Near East. Its population is a polyglot of peoples of every race, nationality, color and creed. Jews and Christians, Moslems and Buddhists live side by side and carry on business together, but they do not merrily slap each other on the shoulder as they pass.

Some of the buildings of the old city remain and tourists visit mosques, the Citadel and the world-renowned museum which contains all the trophies, fully restored, taken from King Tut's tomb. Here and there is pointed out the houses with balconies where the Turks and the Egyptian over-lords formerly had their harems. Through the screens the women who furnished amusement for their masters looked out without being seen, upon the life of the city from which they were prohibited. In those days they were guarded by fat old eunuchs and spent their time perfuming themselves and cultivating physical charm. The beauty of the women of the harems, I was told, is highly exaggerated. The Oriental idea of beauty seems to run toward obesity—in fact, in some places on the Levant, a woman isn't considered handsome until she has a

dimpled chin and huge arms. In the last few decades, the Western type of beauty has begun to take the fancy of the Egyptians and Turks, and the sylph-like figure is as much desired by the maidens of Egypt as the boyish, straight-line figure is sought after by the girls of America. Some of the women of the harems were highly educated and are today leaders in political and educational movements. The high cost of living struck an economic death blow to harems.

The Egyptian State Railway has American-built Baldwin locomotives which are very popular with the people of the country. All the trains seem to be filled with continuous excursioners.

At the railroad station were hordes of people from all parts of the East, for the Egyptians love to travel to and fro, "somewhere and return," and take a train ride for amusement and recreation much as we take automobile trips in the United States.

The railway station at Cairo is the starting and meeting point of the railway service of the Near East. From this station through a street that seemed to be labeled "King George Whiskey," we were whisked to the office of the under-secretary of state, the recipient of my first call in official Egypt. It is located on the right of a winding staircase in the open court of an old government building. The new parliament and government buildings were not completed. As I entered I looked about for a hat rack on which to drape my Stetson. Shown into the office, I discovered the reason why I couldn't find one. Clerks and officials alike, wear their hats all day.

Before me, at a flat-top desk was Hassian Pasha, the under-secretary of state, a graduate of an English University. He is a handsome, intellectual appearing young man of the pure Egyptian type.

After being served coffee and cigarettes, which it is an insult to refuse, we discussed conditions in Egypt and America in which the secretary is much interested. When he informed me that Egypt is practically without a national debt, I thought of the numerous taxes that we poor, struggling Americans are burdened with, to say nothing of income report "botherations."

"We are beginning to think America is about the only nation not looking up territorial claims in Africa and the Orient," said Hassian. Oriental coffee was served in tiny cups that were half-filled with muddy grounds. Perfect coffee—the nectar of the Orient—must come up to the specifications laid down by the under-secretary. "Real coffee," he declares, "must be 'black as night, sweet as love, hot as hell'—and settle on its own grounds," he concluded with a smile.

As I left the government offices, a procession, that might be termed a pageant, was passing. A prominent Italian leader and engineer was enjoying a funeral that reflected all the pomp and ceremony of a king of old. A brass band playing a dirge led the procession at a slow pace, followed by carriage after carriage filled with flowers and floral pieces of every conceivable description. Behind these came a long line of professional mourners—some of whom had never known the deceased. They followed the hearse on foot, shedding an abundance of real, salty tears. If the American motion picture stars knew the secret of which these professional mourners seem to have a monopoly, the glycerine tears of the silver screen might be eliminated. After the mourners, friends and relatives followed in carriages and automobiles. Anniversaries of deaths instead of birthdays of relations and celebrities are celebrated in the Orient. The birth into immortal

life is counted more than the anniversary or the beginning of a mortal career, as the babe naturally has not yet lived the life or achieved the distinction for which the deceased is honored.

On my way to the Continental-Savoy I visited Premier Zaghloul who had just returned from an important governmental mission. His wife bade me welcome and presented her world-famous husband, a tall man with a mustache and a kindly smile, and attired in a double-breasted coat. He seemed weary after his long voyage from Marseilles on the *Sphinx*. Although he was the essence of politeness and congeniality, he disclosed an evident desire to remain silent and retire quickly and permitted his highly intelligent wife to do the talking.

Of Turkish descent and a Circassian by birth, she was the head of the Feminist movement in Egypt, but she nevertheless is willing to concede that East is East and West is West, and that in her country, at least, women must not forget that they are first of all women.

As a speaker she has charm, emotion, and persuasion, but it is doubtful whether she would ever have spoken in public had it not been in deference to her husband.

"Saad is over-fatigued, let me talk in his place," she said, declaring that, first of all, woman's sphere is the home. The Pasha teases her by exclaiming frequently: "A woman must choose between her hobby, home, and politics." To this she retorted that memorable expression of Mrs. Harding's to the effect that her chief hobby was her husband.

"Contact with my distinguished husband," she continued, "is a constant inspiration such as few women enjoy. Just as wine ripens and improves with the years, so the contact and confidences of husband and

ALY ABOU MUSA, Merchant Port Sudan, Red Sea Province

MAHMUD BARSEE, Chief of the French Merchants, Iansen, Berber Province, Sudan

MOHAMMED AHMED AL EMAM, Merchant in El Obeid, Kordofan Province

AL HAGG ABD ERRAHMAN ABDULLA, Merchant from Wad Medina, Capital Blue Nile Province

OTHMAN ZEYAD, Chief of the Merchants, Wad Medina

SIDDIK ESEE, Merchant, Andurman

Signatures of Desert Sheiks whom Mr. Chapple met on the way to Sudan. The word "Al Hagg" means the Pilgrim—one who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca, which is incumbent on every good Moslem who can afford to do so. "Abou Musa" means "Father of Musa." "Al Emam" means the leader of worship in a Mohammedan mosque

wife become more charming and more delightful with time.

"With his great wisdom, intelligence, and kindness —is it any wonder that he is beloved by all Egypt? I have known him in his most depressed as well as his most exalted moments. I nursed him through the time when he was suffering from a wound dealt him by an assassin who sought to end his precious life. But now he appears. I have spoken for him as he speaks for Egypt."

Madame Zaghloul Pasha was enthusiastic in expressing her appreciation of Americans. "America, you know, seeks no territory, brings us no soldiers, and never seems to be seeking trade. She makes things that people want and that they buy. America was the nursery of woman's new emancipation which, with the closer relation between men and women in the companionship of life resulting from it, is a great boon to both sexes."

Six Sudanese chiefs who visited England were then returning home. They seemed to understand the Egyptian ambition to control the Sudan and appreciated what England was doing for them. For some days I had traveled with these representatives from Sudan. They were eager to express freely their appreciation and admiration of England and America, but in Cairo they moved silently through the hotel in robes and turbans, saying little, but observing much. Their mental attitude seemed distinctly different from that of the Egyptians. They even saw the point of my "freshly" imparted American jokes. They seemed less suspicious, less furtive in their actions and thoughts than Egyptians and reflected a sense of humor. As they presented me their autographs in Arabic, together

with their post-office addresses, one of them smiled as he invited me to visit him in Sudan, whispering to the interpreter, "Tell him to bring his cross-word puzzle book."

* * *

Overflowing with the genial *bonhomie* camaraderie of "pardners" in the early days of the Wild West, we supped together in the tender witching night in the valley of the Nile. The nights in Egypt are glorious. I read a newspaper in the light of the moon, and the blue sky overhead was like a flood of unearthly splendor. It was so unreal that I pinched myself. The palms in the balmy breezes seemed to be fanning the waters of the Nile. What a contrast it was to the dust and flies of the day! I thought of the children with their sore eyes covered with flies because the Moslem will kill no living thing, not even the fly that breeds ophthalmia and glaucoma, a spreading blindness, in the Orient. Starved and wounded animals are left to die in agony outside the walls of the city, for the Moslem edict is inviolable—kill no living thing.

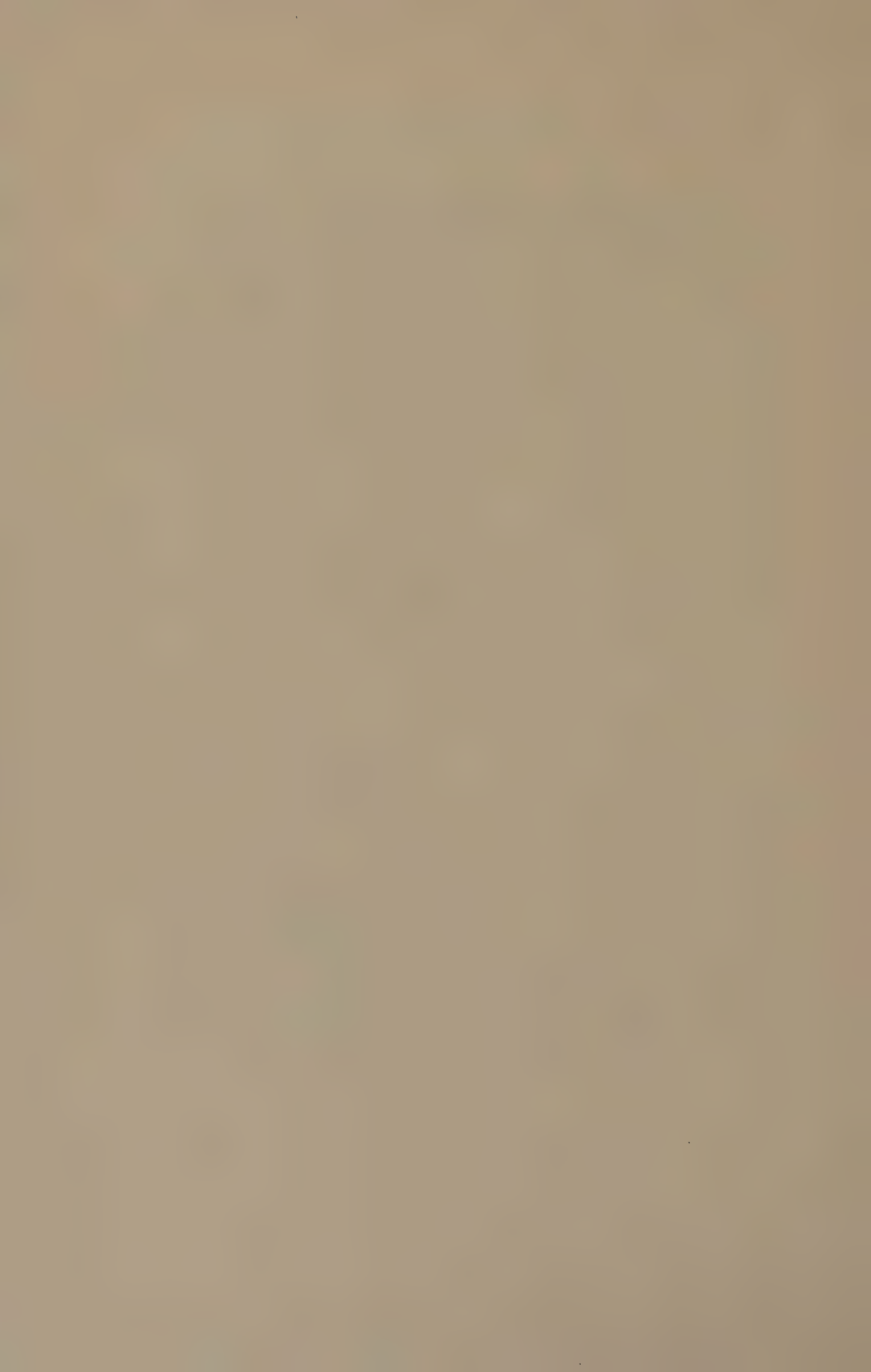
One of these sheiks I shall never forget. His face was as black as ebony, but through that beaming, kindly countenance I saw the reflection of a pure white soul. His very expression, whether he was silent or talking, radiated gentleness. His bearded face was one of the sweetest and most Christlike I have ever seen. Goodness and spirituality sparkled in his smiles. I learned that he had given his life to his people and has built mosques and schools and given his fortune in ministering to the needs of every class. His tribute to the work done by American missionaries, given in sympathetic and glowing terms, indicated his broad spirit of toleration. "We know your Christ as a prophet; he lives with us."

In the party was Maghi, a druggist from Sudan, who had been to America and who gathered us together for a picture. He owned a store in Khartoum and insisted that what was needed in the Sudan was more American and English tourists. "The English and American merchandise which I have in my drug shop has an influence upon our people," he said. "The directions on the bottles in which I dispense my drugs have a message for my customers. In reading catalogues and advertising matter they gain a better idea of your language than in the school books."

On the tour I was fortunate in meeting Madame De Balan, one of the celebrated women world travelers. Her hobby for many years has been excavations. She is counted one of the most famous Egyptologists, having received a degree in London. With my dreams of the pyramids and visiting the ruins in the sands of the desert, her conversation concerning Egypt was an appropriate prologue for the trip planned. She reads hieroglyphics as easily as she reads the headlines of American newspapers. Pointing to an imaginary inscription on the wall, she said, "Here you see a dove flying—that means I am going home. The position of the bird tells the story. The chair and the table indicate dining. Battle pictures are identified by some particular tree or landmark. A hieroglyphic is a complete sentence and like the Japanese characters appear to us like interwoven monograms. Engraved in mud tablets or carved in stone, one becomes accustomed to reading hieroglyphics with the fascination of following a puzzle, and your general reading and study is utilized and applied to illuminate and comprehend the meaning. To me it surpasses, in some ways, the confusion of later printed chronicles in revealing and locating a definite



The Ruins of Lydda, the "Lod" of the Old Testament. Here the traveler stands in the very presence of sacred history. A thousand years before Christ was born this thriving town was known by its ancient name to the familiar characters of those times who live again for us of later centuries in the fascinating pages of Holy Writ



and concrete event. The erudite and ponderous vocabulary, to say nothing of the cryptic footnotes in a history, submerging facts in phrases and words, is eliminated in the reading of hieroglyphics. The search after the unknowable, and the exhilaration of confirming his or her own conjectures concerning the relation and succession of events, is the reward of the archeologist. As we keep on excavating and brushing aside the sands of the centuries, who knows the extent of the eternity of years preceding that may not yet be discovered?" Madame de Balan has inspired many a weary and discouraged archeologist in his untiring effort to solve the riddle of the Sphinx and understand how the people lived seven thousand years ago.

Cairo is a gay city at all seasons of the year. A motley mingling of peoples with a thousand and one ambitions and purposes. That night at the hotel there was an excited party of Americans trying on their punjes, or white canvas helmets, which are associated with the traveler in Africa, India, or the tropics. They were preparing to start early in the morning for a trip to the Pyramids, long ago counted one of the Seven Wonders of the World.



CHAPTER XIV

A day with the Sphinx among the Pyramids where the Centuries looked down upon us

XXXIV

Then to this earthen Bowl did I adjourn
My Lip the secret Well of Life to learn:
  And Lip to Lip it murmur'd—"While you live
Drink!—for once dead you never shall return."

XXXV

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
Articulation answer'd, once did live,
  And merry-make; and the cold Lip I kiss'd
How many Kisses might it take—and give!

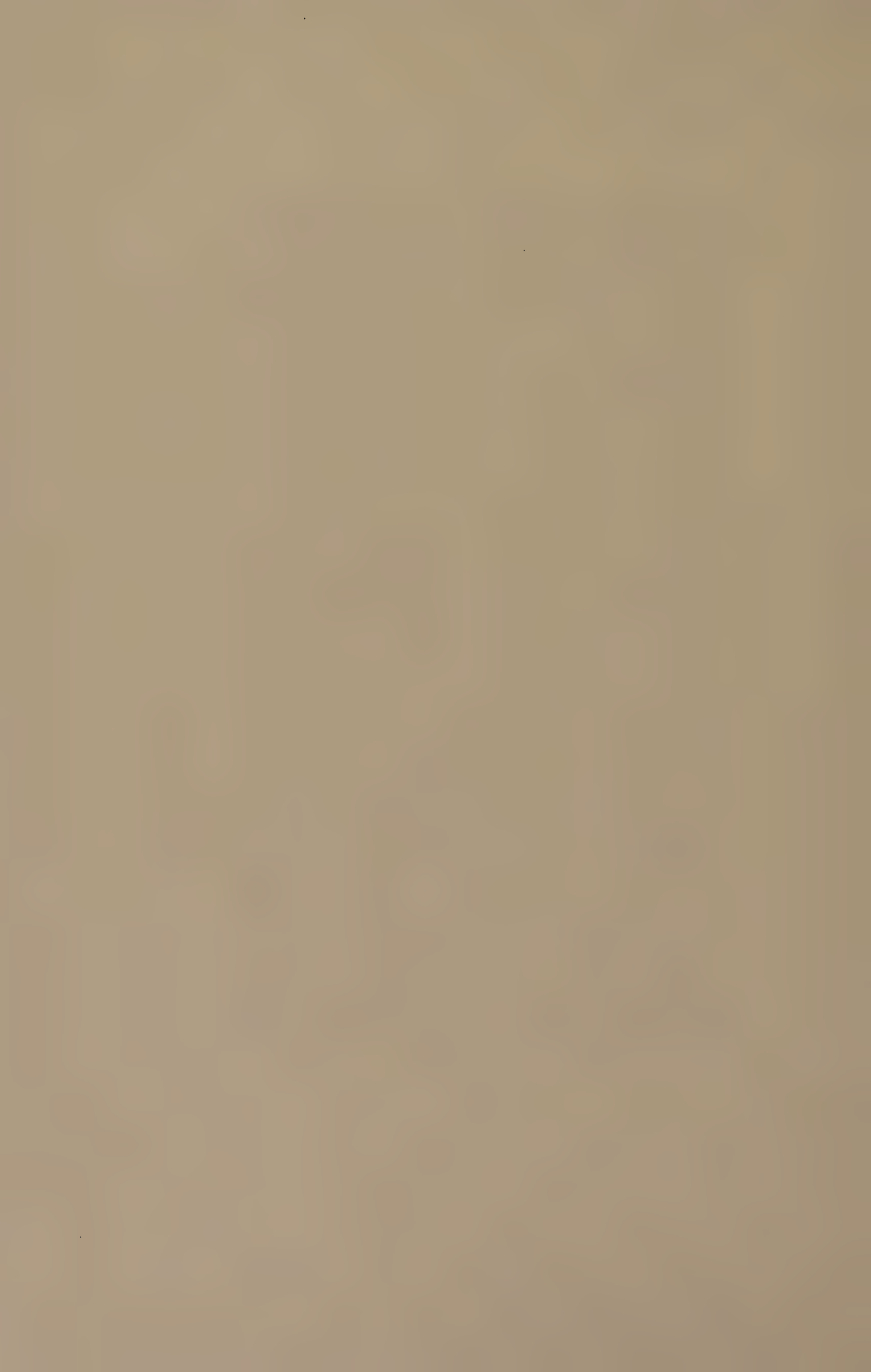
XXXVI

For in the Market-place, one Dusk of Day,
I watch'd the Potter thumping his wet Clay:
  And with its all obliterated Tongue
It murmur'd—"Gently, Brother, gently, pray!"

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*



Doorway of Nativity Church. The old doorway, indicated by the stone arch, was long ago walled up, leaving only a small opening, so that the worshiper has to stoop to get in. The big doorway was closed for purpose of defense



CHAPTER XIV

CALLING at Sheapards Hotel, the hostelry rendezvous where Americans flock during the height of the season in Cairo, I was disappointed to find that none of my countrymen were there at the time.

The street in front of the hotel was lined with dragomen who rushed forward to present their cards and explain their individual, joint, and several merits. The one I finally engaged was a picturesque youth dressed in a long, dark, gold-embroidered, brown robe, topped with the inevitable fez, without which the Egyptian seems to feel he is not entirely dressed. He announced himself modestly as "the best dragoman in Egypt." John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Charles Schwab, and J. P. Morgan, he claimed, were some of his "deestinguished customaires." For reference he very solemnly handed me a letter presented him by one of his former employers. Imagine my amusement when I opened one recommendation some American had written and read:

"This will serve to introduce to those who may, or may not be interested, His Dragomanic Highness, Egypt's premier guide and baksheesh hunter. He is an astute scholar, a genial companion, and a lingering linguist who speaks seven languages badly."

"Why do you use this particular letter?" I inquired, somewhat puzzled.

"It makes Americans always smile and gives me the assignment," he replied.

The frankness and dignity with which the dragoman displayed the letter landed my contract.

In a motor car we dashed out to see one of the most impressive works of man—the great pyramids—the tombs of the Pharaohs of Egypt. Humming over the streets of Cairo on balloon tires, we overtook the tram cars, which are very generally patronized in the oriental metropolis. The road to the desert, overhung with palm trees, was lined with endless processions of camels laden with lumber, hay and grain—one even carried a broken-down Ford. The jam caused by a camel caravan is far worse than a conjestion of trucks. This freight train of the East, the camel, transports anything that his driver can lash on his back. The camel, unlike the horse, is not always likely to stand hitched. It requires experience to handle these animals. By the way, it is a dromedary and not a real two-humped camel which embellishes a certain well-known brand of cigarettes. Walk a mile for a Camel—it's almost a man's job to make a camel walk a mile for you. Drivers spend so much of their lives with their camels that they feel it incumbent upon them to adorn their foreheads with pieces of blue jade to ward off the effects of the Evil Eye. The camel boys are very superstitious and always carry some sort of a talisman about them.

Donkeys of all sizes are also used on these sightseeing caravans. Imagine the sylph-like figure and phantom-like form of a man weighing two hundred pounds and over riding astride a tiny donkey which a native boy keeps going at a disagreeable speed, and you have a perfect figure of one scene from the desert in 1924.

Crossing a long bridge we had our first real glimpse of the winding Nile. They do not call it a river in Egypt, but refer to it as the "Sea." In the spring, when the river overflows its banks and spreads out over

the surrounding fields, it becomes a veritable ocean. Now, the muddy water was lying in one long, winding, serpentine streak of green. The sun, shining down upon it in all its garish glory, touched it up and gave it the brilliant glint of gold.

Boats under twin sail, of picturesque and quaint design, were lazily creeping up and down the river. On either side of the embankment roadway the natives were at work in groups, plowing with their bullocks, or water oxen, the only animals that can be used to cultivate these fields with their muddy bottoms which are often completely beneath the surface of the water.

Seemingly it was "moving day" in Egypt. Everybody appeared to be traveling somewhere. Passing cotton fields and growing maize, we came upon an island that was just beginning to show itself above the water after the freshets. This island, Abdul-Hamid told me, is submerged much of the year, but between the floods yields an enormous crop. From this valley of alluvial soil we rode up on to the boundary of the desert and the village of Mena.

From the balcony of the hotel, with a motion picture director making a picture to be called "The Shadow of Egypt," I surveyed a scene such as one sees in the movie travel pictures. I was his "shadow" for a time.

Like giant sentinels guarding the endlessly stretching sea of sand, the two great pyramids appeared below us in the foreground of the picture. To the right, far in the distance, silhouetted against the blue of the sky, were a group of other pyramids.

Under the few trees surrounding the hotel, which was then closed, snuggling in the border oasis, a meal was served. The food we ate in this leafy arbor consisted of new peas and onions fresh from the soil of the

Nile, served with some strange sort of meat. Onions are one of the original vegetables of Egypt and are supposed to have an odor eternal. The vegetables had a strong flavor of Egyptian goat butter. The tomatoes were small and the lettuce lacked the crispness of our "iceberg" variety. The potatoes were yellow and tasteless. We dined in the center of a buzzing barrage of flies that seemed to have collected from all parts of the desert, and were surrounded, too, by a group of half-starved but sociable dogs.

Soon the dragoman gave the command for the beginning of the first lap of a real camel tour, and in a moment we were off. We changed our mounts for this trip. Most of the party were given riding camels which, like Arabian thoroughbreds, are said to make better speed than the average horse. They insisted on assigning "Methusala" to me and he was a sight to gaze upon! His head and neck stuck out and swung from side to side like an elephant's trunk. His protruding teeth were yellow with age and he chewed his cud like a wise old Yankee concluding a bargain. When the native boys tapped his knees with their sticks in order to make him kneel so that I could mount, he turned his head and gave me an appealing look, grunting and squealing in a very ungenerous way while at his devotions. He didn't seem the least bit attached to his rider. Finally I managed to scramble atop, but here, perched aloft on his mountainous back, I had difficulty in getting my kewpie-like legs astride the broad plateau upon which I sat in this imposing and notable procession among the pyramids.

Riding on an undersized burro, the dragoman led the march like a Grand Duke. Up hill, down dale we went, sometimes trotting, sometimes at a gallop,

sometimes at a swift walk. From the top of my camel charger I gazed down upon the flanks of the camel in front of me, meanwhile trying to maintain the dignity of a sheik. To watch the movement of the rear legs of a camel or dromedary is a valuable study in lost motion. The manner in which he throws one leg in front of the other with an X-like motion is a sight to behold. Drivers arrayed in garments of various hues, one containing seven different colors reminded me of the story of Joseph's coat mentioned in Holy Writ.

Everywhere along the route the caravan was accosted by the natural born and much professionalized native beggars of all ages, who whiningly beseeched "baksheesh." One of my companions shouted back to me:

"Everyone in Egypt seems to have the 'gim-mes.' "

Emaciated, long-bearded vendors of old coins, souvenirs, and scarabs clung to the sides of the camels. They do not seem to understand the word "no," and trot along beside the caravans of tourists until forcibly driven off.

Before reaching the two great pyramids we stopped a moment and from a short distance gazed enraptured at the towering triangles of masonry. In the tombs beneath were buried the remains of kings who, during life, had had sublime faith in the immortality of the soul. One of the pyramids was once covered with marble, but the slabs had been removed to build the mosques in Cairo.

From a distance the walls of the pyramids look smooth and unserried, but "nearer viewed," the truth contained in the poem, "Saint Augustine" becomes evident, for they are, in reality, but "gigantic flights of steps." How these enormous stones were ever placed

in their present position after being transported long distances without modern hoisting equipment and derricks remains a mystery even to modern engineers.

Inside the pyramids there is a great, cave-like mausoleum infested with bats—a lonely, gruesome spot. Standing within the darkness of this ghastly retreat, the winged mice whizzing past my ears and now and again beating against my body with their leathery wings in their blind flight, a feeling of awe, and—I must admit of fear—overcame me. Hastily I made my way out into the open. Others in the party evidently shared my feelings, for I found them already shivering in the hot sun after their exit.

One of the dragomen of our party had true American sporting blood in him. Looking up at the towering apex of the pyramids, he bantered, "I could go up there and return in eight and a half minutes." He was willing to bet a dollar that he could do it.

A young Englishman was the real sport of the party. "I'll take that wager," he piped up, confident of winning. The feat seemed impossible. The dark-skinned Nubian began his race up the pyramid, which seemed to have been built especially for his ascension. The long steps served him admirable and seemed to fit his long legs to perfection. When he reached the pinnacle he stopped, waved the American flag I had given him, much to the disgust of the Englishman, and descended almost at a canter. We held our breaths in fear that the pyramid pacer would miss his footing on one of the gigantic ledges and go tumbling down to a fearful death. In eight minutes and twenty seconds he had returned safely to his starting point and was gazing happily at the stakes which the Englishman was counting into his hand.

"That's jolly good sport," the Britisher commented, and added, "but don't forget the Union Jack next time."

From the heights of these very pyramids Napoleon delivered a classic utterance that inspired the French forces before the famous Battle of the Nile. "Comrades," he declaimed, "forty centuries are looking down on you today."

* * *

Again embarking upon our sluggish ships of the desert, we headed once more across the sands. After an hour astride the back of one of these rolling animals, I felt spry enough to bite Methusala on the neck, but he was happily unaware of my rapacious but well-suppressed intent. We changed our course. There was much to see without penetrating further into the luring sea of sands. The citadels across the river, nestling behind a bank of green, looked more enticing.

As we drew near to the Sphinx, one of the party declared, "What a fitting reminder of President Coolidge." The great head, with weather-beaten and chopped features, loomed up out of the sand. As we approached closer it grew larger, until soon we were actually under the shadow of this ancient bit of sculpture which has stood over ruined temples and mystified tourists for centuries past.

Naturally I was disappointed, expecting to see something grand and lofty—something like the pyramids, but the Sphinx, the eternal riddle, is neither as towering nor as impressive as the great tombs. To me it was just the Sphinx—a large stone statue of a lion, with the face and bosom of a woman. The chipped nose attracted the attention of a beauty doctor in the group. The Sphinx makes a wonderful background and inspires new ideas for the pictures which tourists

always take here in order to have something definite as a reminder of their travels.

The directing genius of the Cyclops Pictures Company, wearing a fierce black mustache, grouped the party for a real "desert act." Then he snapped us in another picture scene representing a camp on the Sahara. Small boys with water bottles on their heads, old men, in fact all the "extras" for the scene, were on "location," ready to play their parts in the picture that was to enlighten the folks at home via the family album, and which would indicate to posterity that "Uncle Joe" visited the pyramids A. D. 1924.

There are still more ruined temples to view in great pools of sand, uncovering stirring historical records. We came upon the area where the Harvard Expedition had been carrying on its excavations. A large sign here informs the world to "Keep off the sand," and is the only thing of its kind I observed in my parade among the pyramids. And yet they say that Harvard doesn't believe advertising for professional purposes is ethical! The motor cars that here awaited us were a welcome sight and seemed to me, after my weary ride across the sands, like chariots of Paradise.

"Methusala" knelt all too precipitously when it came time to dismount and I turned a somersault and landed in the sand in the final scene of our dramatic day at the pyramids. It was a great relief to me when I was finally bundled into a motor car and found myself rushing along the banks of the Nile which shone before us in all the approaching glory of the Egyptian sunset, with its witching reflection of gold.

CHAPTER XV

Crossing the Desert of Sinai by Rail in Four Hours with the Old Schedule of Forty Years on Record

XXXVII

Ah, fill the Cup:—what boots it to repeat
How Time is slipping underneath our Feet:
  Unborn *To-morrow* and dead *Yesterday*,
Why fret about them if *Today* be sweet!

XXXVIII

One Moment in Annihilation's Waste,
One Moment, of the Well of Life to taste—
  The Stars are setting and the Caravan
Starts for the Dawn of Nothing—Oh, make haste!

XXXIX

How long, how long, in infinite Pursuit
Of This and That endeavour and dispute?
  Better be merry with the fruitful Grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

CHAPTER XV

"SUNDAY services for Jerusalem," the railroad time-table boldly declared. It read like a "church notice" bulletin at the Waldorf. The time was given in Arabic numerals, but the hours were numbered up to twenty-four. There is no doubling of time here, and so the familiar A. M. and P. M. are eliminated. There was a regular series of ceremonials that Sunday at the Cairo terminal from which the Jerusalem express leaves at 8:35. For a half hour previous to the departure the passengers leaned out through the windows, laughing and joking with the newsboys while vendors "worked" the train with a routine ritual, "Nothing sold after the train leaves."

The Orient has a great passion for buying and selling, and here, at the station, energy seemed mostly concentrated on selling. Boys and women walked back and forth alongside the train, shouting out the merits of their goods and seemingly reaping a rich harvest.

In the waiting room I observed a white-bearded old man placidly smoking a bubbling water pipe. Pensively he was puffing away, his mind evidently far from his surroundings. I wondered what he was thinking about and immediately determined to find out. Calling an interpreter, I approached the old chap, who, when greeted by the American, looked up, nodded, and offered me one of the mouthpieces of his bottle pipe. I sat down beside him, determined to initiate myself in the mysteries of this Oriental method of inhaling the fragrant weed. I pulled with the suction of a vacuum cleaner and the smoke passed through the water while

the caked tobacco burned with the slowness and the glow of charcoal. My mouth was a bit too small for the bulb and after a whiff or two it seemed as if I were getting more air than tobacco smoke, so I finished up with an American cigarette that, to me at least, had much more of a kick.

My Lady Nicotine reveries were abruptly put to an end when I observed the rush toward the train and heard the air brakes sizzle. I joined the mad scramble and reached the door of my compartment just in time. The whistle began to shriek shrilly, the bell to clang, while the engine slowly gathered speed as it drew the train out of the shed and into the open.

The route we followed led over the delta lands of the Nile where smiling fields made glad the "fellaheen" or farmers who enjoyed a rich harvest and who sat on their knees, with their lunch boxes overtopped with green figs, worrying little about either railroad block systems or legislation.

At the first station we came to, the train stopped. I looked out. The brakemen had descended and were moving about as though they had all the time in the world. It looked like a long wait, and so I followed their example. Stepping out of my compartment, I wandered about through the station, and, in one corner, came upon a white-bearded sheik. My interpreter told me he was repeating the one hundred different names of God in his prayers, but he informed me that Allah was the most sacred of His titles. Note this: A Moslem never asks Allah for anything for himself; praises God for himself rather than anticipating Divine favors to come to him in person.

The old man told me that one-twelfth of the year the Moslems go without eating in daylight. In the

month of Ramadam they never break their fast from sunrise to sunset except, as my informant slyly admitted, when they eat a hulled and mashed dish of some kind of beans. This proves that Boston is not the original bean-eating hub.

The aged sheik related some interesting traditions, one of which is that on the mid-month day the great Sundrah Tree in Paradise is shaken and that every leaf that falls bears upon it the name of one who will be called to the Great Beyond. When I was leaving the holy man, I bowed and said, in my most oratorical manner, "May your leaf never fall."

The sheik glanced up, shook his head sadly, and smiled. "Kismet!" he replied solemnly, after a moment. As I rushed back to the train the fateful word was ringing in my ears.

Back in the compartment, a twinkling-eyed young Egyptian taught me my first sentence in Arabic. "La la imshi," he said, and I repeated the words after him until I knew them by heart. Then, determined to use the words before I forgot them, when a lady in the next compartment offered me some native candy which she had just purchased, I thanked her in the sentence which I had been led to believe was a polite response. Imagine my surprise when the woman arched her eyebrows and haughtily turned her head away. It was then I learned that the words were equivalent to the classic American expression "Go chase yourself." Then and there I ceased trying to learn Arabic.

For some distance the railroad to Jerusalem skirts the Suez Canal. As I looked out of the window through the growing darkness I could see groups of black sails silently making their way up and down the waterway. It was such a scene as that envisioned in the title of

Olive Schreiner's novel, "Ships that Pass in the Night." The canal reminded me somewhat of our own Cape Cod canal. In places it is not wide enough to enable boats to pass each other and there is a continual gruff honk of horns as they meet and salute each other with a curt "After me," as they snuggle close to the sand embankment, poking their bows into the first open channel that appears.

At the witching hour of midnight we arrived at Kantara on the Suez. The "through train" to Jerusalem finishes its run here. "Everyone out" is the call at this point on the frontier where the original Jerusalem "sleeper" is awaiting passengers from the other side. It was a line of marvelously patient people that lined up with their luggage awaiting the signal to embark. There was every sort of costume in that group. Crossing the Suez Canal in a gasoline ferry-boat, we could look out and down the lane of light leading on to Arden on the Red Sea which has been called "the jumping-off place of the universe." Custom duties were collected in a haphazard fashion amid a Babel of buzzing tongues. It seemed that no two officials spoke the same language. A slip of paper went one way and a slip of paper another. Baggage was sent in one direction and the passenger in the opposite. I was agreeably surprised amid this confusion to find a representative of the American Express Company who dispatched me over the frontier like a piece of perishable goods with tracer and way bill attached.

From one of the officials who spoke a bit of English, I learned that typewriters are heavily taxed here and that many are sent in bond. Phonographic records, motion pictures and pistols are under a ban as strict as the Mosaic code or gunpowder.

Now we were in the Sinai Desert, tired and weary. All night long the cars swept over the sands of this ancient wilderness where Moses wandered with the children of Israel for forty years and where the "Well of the Oath" still quenches the thirst of the nomads.

Sleep was out of the question, and so I spent most of the night gazing through the window at the monotonous whirring sea of sands shimmering in the moonlight.



A desert sky canopied the scene. An infinite number of clusters of stars seemed to overhang the expanding horizon. Not a breath of air stirred—even the flies and mosquitoes with which the Orient abounds seemed to find it impossible to live in the lifeless air of these wastes.

At one stop I went out upon the platform and caught a glimpse of a tribe of Bedouins whose ancestors had roamed these parts for centuries. They had gathered to "see the train come in." Near the water tank were the black tents in which they sleep and which, when they move to other surroundings, they fold and "silently steal away." These wandering tribes of the desert live largely on camels' milk and scarcely ever see a green thing—even a blade of grass is almost a novelty to them.

On either side of the railroad built by the British

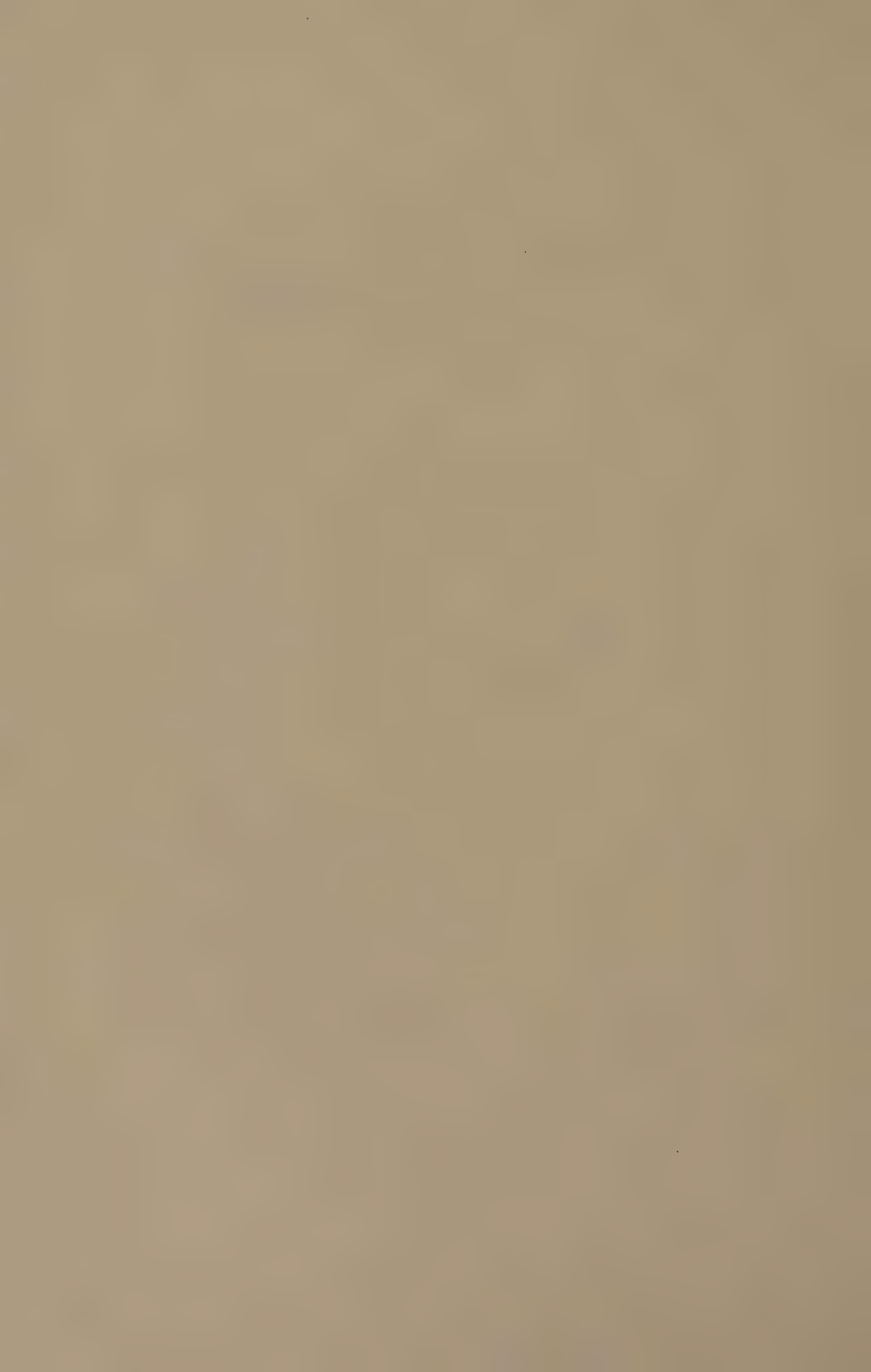
during the war, is a pipe line carrying water to the fields of the Promised Land. On the opposite side is another line of pipe which carries the oil that serves as fuel for the locomotive. Even here, where there was scarcely another living thing, there was an infinite number of the haggard, hungry dogs of the East. They blinked their eyes and wagged their tails as I fed them crumbs from my midnight lunch.

The region seems to lack civic or fraternal organization. With the exception of an occasional mission there is scarcely any evidence that social greeting is understood. Animals seem closer to some of these people than their fellow-men. The Arab lives with his horse by day and night. During the light of day he rides the horse in the manner that has many times been pictured by the artists, and in the evening he sleeps in the tent with him. The Arab nomad, it would appear, treats animals with more consideration than human associates. He appreciates the gratitude of dumb animals and refuses to allow them to be killed. Even the fleas which are the scourge of the Orient, are sacred and must not be destroyed. This same human interest in all God's creatures is manifested by Americans who utilize their names as titles for civic and fraternal organizations. We already have great organizations named after animals, such as "The Moose," "Elks," "Lions," "Eagles," "Owls," etc. Dogs, camels, horses and mules have not yet been honored in this way, although they are usually considered man's most faithful friends.

The innate love and appreciation of animals by humans the world over is indicated in their popular use in trade-marks. This sort of insignia can be traced back to the eagle of the Roman empire and the sacred



Mahelas on the Tigris River. These slow-moving boats with their tattered triangular sails move sedately over the surface of the sluggish stream, laden with the commerce that has flowed to Bagdad for a matter of ten thousand years



cow of Egypt, which recent excavations have indicated goes further back into the history of mankind than anything yet discovered in the marvelous revelations of excavation in the ancient world.

In those hours of reflection I thought many times of that scene at Luxor. From here had come the news which proved of more general interest to Europe and America than the details concerning the life of any living monarch. Howard Carter at the tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amen had crowned a long dead but new found king. A treasury of relics had been moved before the dispute with the Egyptian officials stopped all the activity which had recently been renewed. There were then thirty-six unopened cases awaiting Carter's inspection—the basis for a novel of travel and history carrying the atmosphere of the most ancient of peoples.

There was really nothing to see at Luxor and the plethora of ruins soon pall on the visitor. Mr. Carter insisted it would be impossible to continue the work until the restrictions and discourtesies of the Public Works Department were removed.

Arriving at Luxor in an aeroplane, only a passing glimpse scarcely qualified me as an expert in Egyptology. But I did feel a thrill of wonderment when I stood before the glass case containing the chair in which King Tut-Ankh-Amen sat and the chariot in which he rode, while all about me were the decorations. A large coiled snake, which symbolizes the key to life, was in evidence. There were numerous elaborately decorated and inlaid jewel boxes in the collection, also sandals.

* * *

An afternoon with the mummies in the museum at Cairo amid the relics that are preserved indicated that the Egyptians of old were a small people with slender

hands. In the mouth of one of the mummies was an indication of a gold filling—almost perfectly preserved —a tribute to the skill of the ancient dentists.

A giant statue indicates an ancient king with his arm about his wife, the queen—an impressive symbol of amicable domestic relations that it might be well to duplicate in these dizzy days when divorces offset the impressiveness and solemnity of marital relations. One of Cleopatra's obelisks, counted the two rare Egyptian relics, belongs to the city of New York and conveys the record of the other side of the picture.

Every hour of the long and lonely vigil made me realize how closely human beings can come to Jehovah in the stunning silence of the desert. When the train stopped I could almost imagine the voice of God speaking in the winds as they swept along in the whirling dust. We seemed closer to the veil between the finite and the infinite than in any other place on earth, and now I could understand why the children of Israel were disciplined in the desert, which so enhances the beauty and glory of verdure that it requires but little of the glory of growing things to impress one with the beauties of Paradise and the considerate kindness of the Creator in caring for and providing the necessities of life for human beings.

In these moments there came to me an impulse to pray with the opening day, the time when humans most need divine care. While we are asleep, we are immune from most of the dangers which confront us during the day. Humankind then has something akin to the innocence of the slumbering babe. In the dimming light I looked upon a typical far-western landscape of rolling plains. I had to look again to assure myself that I had not been catapulted back to America during

the few minutes I had dozed. Here were corn fields, and, far in the distances, community villages and camps. Again I rubbed my eyes to see if it was really black earth before us or merely more sand.

The Sinai desert was left behind and I was now looking over into the land of Canaan with memories of Egypt somewhat different from those who had followed Moses into the Promised Land.





On the bank of the Tigris, surrounded by palms, stands the tomb of Ezra the "Scribe" (grandson of Seraiah the High Priest), author of that book of the Bible which bears his name, who went up from Babylon to Jerusalem with the second immigration of exiles during the reign of Artaxerxes, King of Persia, who was an oppressor of the Jews



CHAPTER XVI

The Meeting with Six Noted Sheiks of Sudan and the American Missionary

XL

You know, my Friends, how long since in my House
For a new Marriage I did make Carouse:
Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

XLI

For "*Is*" and "*Is-not*" though *with* Rule and Line,
And "*Up-and-down*" *without*, I could define,
I yet in all I only cared to know,
Was never deep in anything but—Wine.

XLII

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came stealing through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas—the Grape!

XLIII

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute:
The subtle Alchemist that in a Trice
Life's leaden Metal into Gold transmute.

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

CHAPTER XVI

WHEN the engines stalled in the aeroplane skimming the shores of the river Nile—my heart seemed to stop, too, as we glided for five brief but seemingly eternal minutes. Perhaps I turned as pale as the white sands in the landscape below. It was only five minutes—but it seemed five hours. Moses on Pisgah's height could not have visioned more than the aviator sees today along the Nile with the naked eye, to say nothing of what comes within the range of the field glasses. Think of it—the aeroplane was sweeping by with a greater velocity than any wind or hurricane that ever blew. Over one hundred miles an hour my physical self was being projected through space—with almost the speed of a spirit! Yes, I must admit there was a feeling of relief when I felt my feet touching Mother Earth once again and caught the refreshing breath of growing verdure. My balancing days in mid-air are over.

My traveling companion in this expedition to Sudan was Dr. Sowash, an American missionary from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, who has spent most of his life in Egypt and the Sudan. After the stop at the airport, we looked down over the upper Nile Valley from the balcony of the hotel. Our eyes swept the glimmering sheen of the tortuously winding river of blue-green. The Doctor had just returned from a vacation in England—and was actually homesick for Sudan.

"That, truly, is a sight for my eyes," he remarked as he turned toward me. "That is Nature at her best."

For a moment we continued to gaze appreciatively

at the picture spread out beneath us. There, bordered by the muddy brown of its banks, lay the Nile, the King of Rivers, as the ancients called it. Impressed with its majesty, I appealed to the Doctor:

"Tell me something about it."

Seating ourselves in comfortable, old style Egyptian chairs, the Doctor unfolded a map on the wicker table between us. With a pencil he traced the boundaries of the region in which we were traveling. Then he located the valley that formed the bed of the river flowing past the hotel where we were stopping. I settled back into my chair and half closed my eyes as the Doctor began speaking. I could visualize with remarkable accuracy the scenes he depicted and the facts he explained because I was breathing the air of the ancient land that cradled civilization. He knew the region as well as I know some alleys and half-forgotten crooked streets of Boston.

"The Nile," continued Dr. Sowash, "has always been an object of speculation to man. The ancients wondered at it, and marveled at its length. They followed its course for miles and miles, but could find no end to its windings. With their characteristic desire to come to some conclusion, albeit a highly imaginative one, they decided it had its origin in the heavens—that it found its source in the rising sun, for they had not then traced the river to Lake Victoria Nyanza.

"There used to be a question as to the source of the Nile, some contending that, although it rises far below the lakes and actually flows through Lake Victoria Nyanza, where Victoria Falls, twice the height of Niagara Falls, has already become the delight of daring tourists and moving picture men, who sweep in and out of the great canyons like birds—taking pictures for

The Law Courts in The Kasbah in Tangier

Market in Tangier



the movies betimes. The river is of such enormous extent that they called it the sea—the name by which the natives still refer to the Nile. Since then, of course, the Victoria Falls have been definitely located on the right and have no more to do with the Nile than the Zambesi, Amazon, or the Platte.

"Thousands of years later," continued the Doctor, "explorers from the West made their way to its shores and followed the bed of the valley to learn something of the King of Rivers. One after another they traced their course for miles, and then lost their way in the maze which led them into the jungles of Africa. Now we have its entire length mapped out for us. Every mile of its surface is traced out upon that sheet there." I looked closer as he continued, and consulted the map for a second. "It runs practically north and south through about thirty-eight degrees of latitude, tapping the Great Lakes of Africa with a width varying from five to one hundred miles. No wonder the natives call it the bed of the ocean eternal as it has flowed on through the centuries for thousands of miles to its mouths in the Mediterranean at Rosetta and Damietta."

The Doctor paused for a moment and regarded me thoughtfully. "Imagine the endless mutations through which the world has passed since the deluge! This entire region has been in a gradual process of change since time immemorial. Once, we know, the Nile had at least seven outlets to the sea. Today it has but two, and the distinction of being one of the few rivers in the world with more than one mouth. The sea is about one hundred and fifty miles from the place at which the waters of the river divide for the Delta. It is only important to realize the river's vastness, and of the

importance to Egypt and Africa of the Nile, in order to understand the recent political upheavals. During the flood season, when it has overflowed its banks, it becomes the mightiest river known to man. Then one realizes that it has latent possibilities for development through irrigation of millions of acres of land, and has been one great outlet for Great Britain's River and Harbor bill.

"The great empire of now arid land lends itself to the magnificent irrigation schemes that British brains have developed," continued the Doctor. "Its banks have now been extended and thousands of acres of arable land made fertile by the system the English have constructed in Egypt. The more extensive scheme of reservoirs and canals will convey the life-giving waters to vast districts of the Sudan."

He made a cross on the map with his pencil. "Right here," he said, "about one hundred and forty miles from Khartoum, they are building a great dam which will be capable of irrigating three million acres of land, most of which will be cotton-producing—and Egyptian cotton is the best.

"It's strange, isn't it," he said, "how something that is forced upon a person's attention brings to mind for the first time a new world to which he has hitherto paid no heed? How many of you Americans would have known much of Egyptian history had it not been for Carter's discovery of the tomb of King Tut at Luxor? And yet, the discovery was, after all, as these matters go, relatively unimportant."

* * *

Mention of the use of the Nile for irrigation purposes and to develop power by harnessing the new currents of the Nile resulting from the dams, brought to my

mind the dissatisfaction which the natives have manifested with this scheme. They fight hydro-electric development as creating lightning in defiance of the Deity.

"The Egyptians are like children," declared the Doctor, smiling indulgently. "They must be reasoned with and the system explained to them. Egypt need not be alarmed lest the precious waters of the Father of Rivers be taken from them. There is plenty of water in this gigantic river to irrigate both the Sudan and Egypt, and still allow millions of cubic yards to flow into the sea. Leave the matter in the hands of the expert British engineers, for they have measured the water of the Nile almost to the last drop in opening large areas of new land."

It was growing dark. We sat back watching the night close in. The stars seemed to peep timidly in the great blue vaults overhead as the moon coyly winked over the black thread of the horizon and continued its course into the heavens. The silent Egyptian night was upon us. Sitting in the dark, our cigars burnt round, red holes in the darkness. Below us, along the banks of the Nile, other lights began to appear. Dozens of glowworms seemed slowly making their way up and down the river. The valley seemed given over to the silent watchers of the night.

Dr. Sowash broke the silence as he pointed with his fan. "There you have the mysterious Father of Rivers at rest," he said. "It symbolizes the many nations that have lived and found their nurture on its banks and now lie peacefully slumbering in the moonlight.

"What has already been accomplished reveals what this work means to agricultural Egypt and Sudan.

Since the British occupation in 1882, a sterling type of engineer has had charge of the work and has studied and almost worshipped this river for its power and irrigation possibilities."

Let no one think for a moment that in bringing under cotton cultivation vast areas of this land, the food supply of the Sudan will be endangered. There are plenty of other large areas just as capable of producing "oura"—the chief grain of the country—which have scarcely been cultivated.

The Nile Valley described to me, below or north of Wady Halfa, the border city of Sudan, sustained the oldest civilization in this valley long years before Abraham went out of Ur of the Chaldees. Recent discoveries go to prove that there existed written communication between Egypt and Babylonia long before the Hebrew nation came into existence. The pyramids look down upon at least forty centuries of time, and through all these centuries the riddle of the Sphinx and the Nile has been unsolved and bids fair to remain so until her eyes close on the consummation of all things and time passes into the boundless cycles of eternity.

The gorgeous temples at Karnac, with their massive columns of solemn granite that even today take on a polish that make them veritable mirrors, reveal the glories of a long lost civilization, while the royal tombs speak eloquently of a past majesty and magnificence. The paintings in these rock-hewn sepulchres remain to this moment in their marvelous colors, the envy of the modern artist. The physical form of mummies have preserved the human form down through the ages. The dead remain much as they were when the ancient embalmer laid them in the royal caskets and sealed them in the royal granite sarcophagus. Some of these



Surviving ruins of the Royal Palace at Ctesiphon on the Tigris, once the capital of New Persia. This huge arch was built over the enormous hall below, where the magnificent kings of New Persia held their splendid court. The vault is 84 feet across and is the largest masonry arch still standing in Asia. Fighting under the very shadow of these ancient ruins, the British expedition captured Bagdad in 1917



royal funeral processions as they swept up through the Valley of the Kings were truly magnificent in their barbaric splendor.

"If the lofty mountain peaks in the distance, that are the sole survivors of those wondrous scenes, could only speak, what solemn tales they might pour into our ears!"

As the Doctor paused, I thought of the pomp and glory that must have attended the funeral processions of King Tut and the hundreds of his ancestors who lie buried in the Valley of the Kings. If such pagan demonstrations of power and wealth were theirs after death, what must have been the scenes while they lived? The speaker interrupted my thoughts with his fervid and eloquent peroration:

"The ancient civilization has passed away and has taken with it many of its secrets, but it has left monuments and tombs, its paintings and mummies, without revealing just how the work they evolved was accomplished. It is one of the secrets that only graven, inanimate lips or hieroglyphics can tell.

"The Pharaohs have come and gone, the reign of the Ptolemies has ended," the Doctor continued, in oratorical tones. "The ancient glory of the courts has departed, but still a remnant of the ancient race survives, dwells by the ancient river, is fruitful and multiplies. The Egyptian 'fellaheen' or farmer, still lives much as he did in ages past. He uses much the same type of agricultural implements, drawing his camel behind the same type of plow as that followed by Elisha when the mantle of a higher calling was thrown over his shoulders. He still employs the same method of treading out the corn on the earthen threshing floor and the same process of winnowing chaff from the wheat."

From the street below came the sound of camel boys quarreling in the Arabic tongue. Dr. Sowash paused to listen, and as the sounds became less harsh and strident, and the hubbub gradually subsided, he smiled.

"They've made up," he said, with a chuckle. "You can never tell whether they're joking or quarreling, unless you understand the peculiar inflection. They were speaking the pure Arabic of the Bedouins. Arabic is the common tongue of many millions of the inhabitants of Africa, spoken over the whole of the continent. Wherever Mohammedans live, there you will find the Arabic language with a great variation in dialect and intonation. Millions repeat the Koranic prayers in Arabic without understanding much of the meaning. To the Moslem mind, no prayer can be efficacious unless it is offered in the Arabic tongue. Whether he be a Chinese, a Japanese, or an an Indian, if he is a Mohammedan, he must say his prayers in the language of the ancient prophet of Mohamet, and about one-fifth of the human race uses the Arabic tongue in part or in whole."

It is one of the oldest languages known to man. Some authorities even declare that Abraham spoke it. The Arabs, in their usual poetic manner, call it the "language of the angels."

When I took out of my pocket the typewritten letter of introduction that had been given me at the office of the Egyptian Under-Secretary of State and spread it out to the tiny beam of light that shone out on the balcony from the window in front, it looked like a page from ancient Hebrew script or a stenographer's notebook, with its strange curves and lines.

"Queer looking writing, isn't it?" Dr. Sowash declared. "Doesn't seem to mean anything to you,

although it has been the means of communication between thousands of Orientals for centuries past. It doesn't look much as though it has a regular set of characters, but it has, and a very ancient one, too."

He took down a book and continued: "The alphabet has twenty-two consonants. Arabians do not usually make use of vowels, but they are, nevertheless, part of the script, and consist of tiny marks placed above or below the letters to which they belong. For the most part the letters have about the same sounds as those in our English alphabet. A few, however, have no equivalent in the Arabic, and vice versa. The sounds indicated by a few letters seem to be imitations of those made by certain animals. There is one that resembles the hiss of the viper and another the sound made by the angry camel. All Semitic languages are related, and Arabic and Hebrew have much in common; either the one sprang from the other, or both had a common origin."

Just then a group of Sudanese friends gathered below to serenade the Doctor on his home-coming. It was weird music and in the mingling of sounds I fancied that I heard echoes of the refrain of the mystic Aeolian harp swept by the breezes of the Aegean Sea, mingled with the roll of drums, which gave the first suggestion of rhythm and music.

* * *

All this time I was eager to learn more about the Doctor and his work. While he was very willing to tell me all he could about Egypt and the Nile, he was altogether too modest to speak of the wonderful work he has done and is still accomplishing. Every citizen of Sudan whom I had met en route was high in his praise of the American Mission, which began its work

in Egypt in 1854. During its seventy years history it has been a powerful influence for good through the schools, hospitals, and churches it has established.

Three languages have been taught: Arabic, English, and French. The United Presbyterian church is the pioneer Protestant denomination at work in this region. They have established over two hundred of these institutions along twenty-five hundred miles of the course of the river Nile, with an enrollment of nearly twenty thousand boys and girls, most of whom are Egyptians, although many Sudanese and some Syrians, Greeks, Armenians, and Jews also attend.

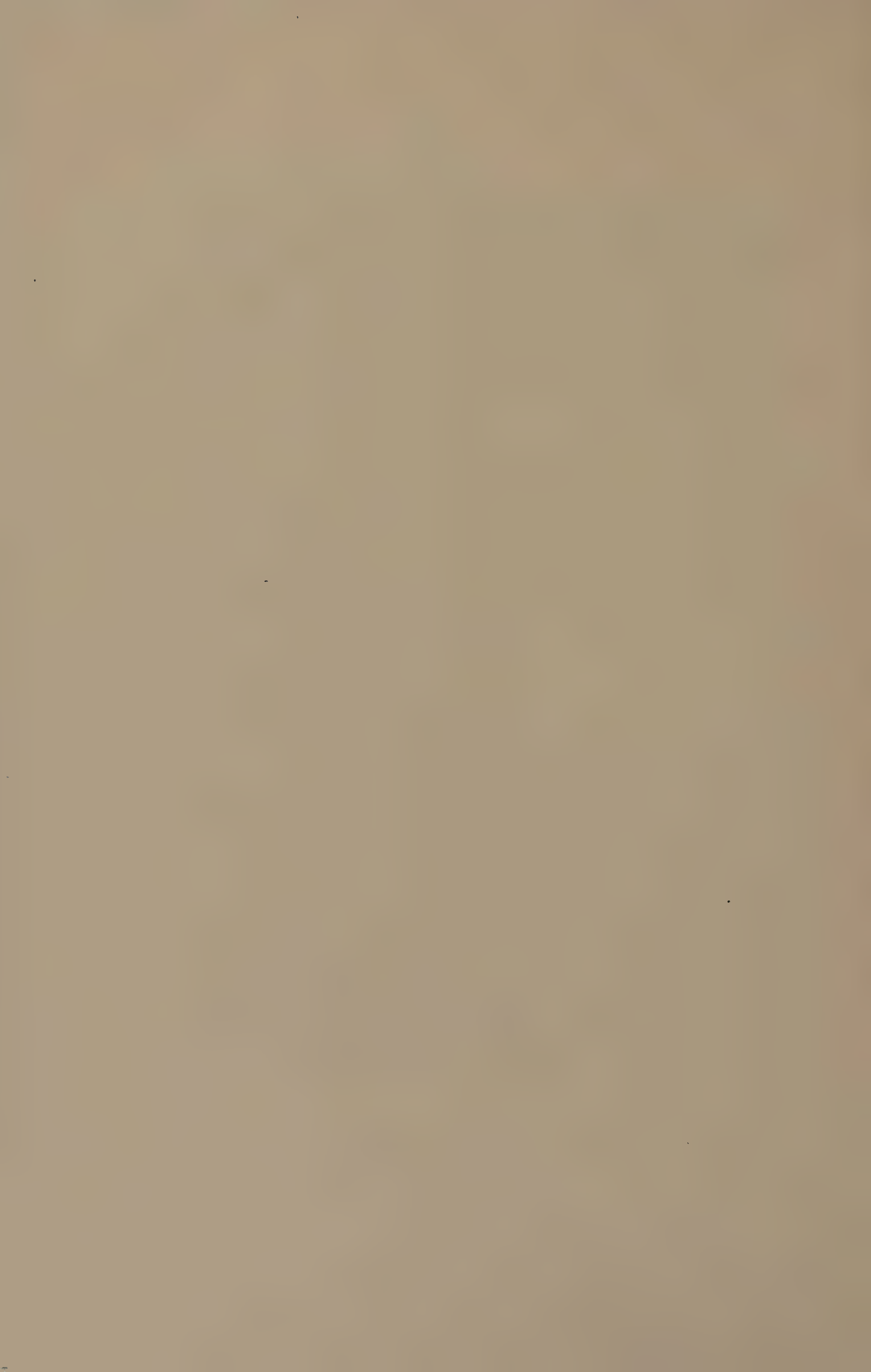
Hospitals, maintained by the Mission and under the direction of American men and women, minister annually to the needs of many thousands. Some of the missionaries have spent from twenty to forty years in the work, and not one of them would ever think of changing his consecrated vocation.

Both Egyptians and Sudanese have responded to the efforts of this valiant band of "good Samaritans." At the present time native graduates of the American Mission schools may be found holding important positions in public life all the way from Alexandria on the coast to the confines of Abyssinia, nearly three thousand miles distant as the river runs.

The American Mission was the pioneer organization in school work on the Nile. When it began its work, there were practically no schools for either boys or girls and no desire for education. At the present time schools cannot be built fast enough to accommodate the numbers who plead for education. Oriental fathers used to say, "I never learned to read or write; why should my son do so? As for my daughter—she is no better than a camel." Now the parents encourage



The Garden of Eden, on the Tigris. Tradition points to this spot as the site of the original Garden where Eve picked the apple that has caused so much trouble in the world. There is a certain melancholy pleasure to be derived from wandering about this very ancient beauty spot and speculating upon what the world might be like now if the original flapper had not pulled such a bone



their girls and boys to secure an education. Assiet College, with a present enrollment of over seven hundred boys, housed in modern buildings, had its beginning in a donkey stable with four boys in attendance.

The work of the Mission in Sudan began with some explorative work carried on in 1899 and 1900. The pioneers in this work were G. K. Giffen, Dr. H. F. McLaughlin, a physician, and Dr. G. A. Sowash, and two of this trio still remain in the field. Dr. Giffen has just completed forty-three years of service in the Nile Valley, while Dr. Sowash has already rounded out his twenty-eighth year of service. They have both seen the work grow from humble beginnings to its present large proportions.

The political situation on the Nile is a matter not easily understood by those who have not lived long in the country. Egypt is at present at another climactic parting of the ways. The world is watching the experiment in self-government which has been on trial there. At the time the British withdrew from the internal affairs of Egypt it was generally expected the people would soon realize the enormous benefits that English control rendered them, but it was then freely predicted that the experiment would turn out badly.

The policy of absolute self-government and withdrawal of British troops was advocated largely by the young men of the nation, who know little or nothing of the chaotic state of affairs before the British occupancy. They were not disposed to listen to the saner counsel of the older heads. It was no great surprise to hear of the murder of Sir Lee Oliver Stack, Sirdar of the Sudan. Such an occurrence was expected long before. They would have been more surprised if something of that nature had not occurred.

A Sudanese chaplain just returning from England who spoke to me through an interpreter, remarked: "The Egyptians have done little to make themselves beloved by the Sudanese, but they have done much to merit suspicion and distrust. The civilized world has every reason to suspect that were Egypt given the possession of the Sudan she would very soon begin to deal with her as in former days, which the older Sudanese father and mother will never forget. The very thought of these days makes the mothers of the land hold their children closer to their breasts lest they be torn from them by the heartless slave raiders." The chaplain shook his head and closed his eyes as though to shut out the awful vision.

"No," he said, "the bones of too many thousands of the sons and daughters of the Sudan have been left to bleach by the roadside ever to induce the Sudanese to desire the Egyptian to rule over them. The rule of the Briton in the Sudan has been a most benevolent and a just rule, and the Sudanese has no desire for any other."

It was quite true; the ending of British influence in Egypt was a disaster. In the Sudan it would be a catastrophe.

Dr. Sowash broke the silence that followed with a "God forbid." There was a look of silent approval among those gathered about the swarthy-faced chaplain. The Doctor nodded good-night as I followed him along the balcony, looking out for snakes, to the doorway leading inside. Together we climbed the flights of stairs to our rooms and turned in after looking out again on that matchless night sky that enhalos the Nile.

CHAPTER XVII

"Up the green Nile" toward the Domain of the Sudan and a chat with the Sheiks

XLIV

The mighty Mahmúd, the victorious Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde
  Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters and slays with his enchanted Sword.

XLV

But leave the Wise to wrangle, and with me
The Quarrel of the Universe let be:
  And, in some corner of the Hubbub coucht,
Make Game of that which makes as much of Thee.

XLVI

For in and out, above, about, below,
'Tis nothing but a Magic Shadow-show,
  Play'd in a Box whose Candle is the Sun,
Round which we Phantom Figures come and go.

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

CHAPTER XVII

AN Oriental song, chanted in the weird and monotonous minor key characteristic of the music of the Orient, awoke me early, and I was up little later than the sun the next morning at Wady Halfa on the Sudanese border, en route to Khartoum. Dr. Sowash, however, proved the early bird; he was already in the dining room when I entered, waiting for his American cereal—his one great luxury. As I approached, he smiled benignantly and waved me to a seat, where green onions were served as a breakfast appetizer.

It was still fairly cool and I made mention of the fact. The Doctor smiled. "Wait until the sun climbs a bit higher," he said, "you'll find it will be hot enough to make Ethiopian satellites seem like icebergs in comparison." He had propped an Arabic newspaper against the sugar bowl, American style, and was reading it.

The missionary looked up and took off his glasses as if deliberating. "It's this Sudan business. Looks to me as though there's going to be quite a disturbance in these parts. They've been having anti-British demonstrations at Khartoum and Omdurman. These outbursts often have a very bad effect upon the population as a whole. It's the reaction known as mob psychology."

Dr. Sowash shook his head as he continued: "The trouble goes back more than a century. To understand the present situation requires some knowledge of Sudanese history, as I see it."

The native boy in fez and long skirts returned with the fruit. The missionary smiled as he looked at the dates, ripe olives and figs served in lieu of the ever-present grapefruit in America.

"You can tell an American by his morning meal," he declared. I munched the mushy figs and toyed with the myriad seeds of a pomegranate.

"Speaking of this affair which is taking up so much of the space in the newspapers—it really began during June, when a number of prominent Sudanese at Omdurman asserted their loyalty to the existing regime in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. As you may have already discovered, the people here have always seemed partial to the English, who, under the condominium or partnership agreement between England and Egypt, really govern the country.

"The following day, Zaghloul Pasha, then the Premier, assured the Egyptian Chamber in Cairo that the Sudanese were clinging to Egypt and were anxious to join hands with her, and as a result Egypt would insist on complete evacuation by the British. The anti-British demonstrations began. They were fomented largely by the White Flag Society, which, according to English authorities, was financed and inspired from Cairo. From that time on, declaration followed declaration, both on the part of the British and of the Egyptians. There were demonstrations resulting in August in a fracas at Atbara, not far from here, when a native Arab detachment fired upon a mutinous Egyptian railway battalion which was smashing rolling stock and machinery, and resulted in a great deal of bloodshed, much of which was probably unnecessary.

"Naturally, the unrest throughout Egypt and the Sudan came to the attention of the British government

and led to the assertion by some one in authority that there was really nothing to question the official view that the Sudanese are, on the whole, contented with English rule and would prefer it to that of the Egyptians, with which they had disastrous experience in the past.

"The recent rioting has been confined to towns having a large Egyptian population, and propaganda has a subtle way of spreading in the Orient."

The sun had gained great headway in its daily climb, and now I began to feel the real "atmosphere" of Sudan. The Doctor mopped his brow with his handkerchief and looked just as if he were about to say it, but I stopped him with a casual query: "Seems very comfortable."

"It will soon be sizzling and there will not seem to be a breath of air in this lower room. Let's go where there's more air and less sun. I had a tussle with a snake in my bedroom last night—but the coast is now clear."

* * *

Lighting a cigarette, I followed to the balcony. As we came out into the open, six stalwart Sudanese chieftains, dressed in long flowing immaculately clean white robes and turbans, rose and nodded to the Doctor. One carried a copy of the Koran. We made our way to the corner of the veranda where they had gathered for coffee.

"Seems I came up just in time," said the Doctor in Arabic. "I'm leaving for the mission in an hour, and I want you to explain the situation here in Sudan, 'The Land of the Blacks,' to my friend."

Doctor Sowash then turned to me and said: "These men are among the real leaders of Sudan." With a

wave of the hand he pointed out each one as he gave me their names. The first, a handsome, well-built, patriarchal appearing sheik, was Aly Abou Musa, a merchant from Port Sudan, in the Red Sea Province. The next, also a fine-looking man, was Mahmud Barsee, chief of the French merchants at Ianzen, Berber Province. The third was Mohammed Ahmed Al Emam, one of the principal Sudanese merchants in



El Obeid, Kordofan Province. Another was called Al Hagg Abd Errahman Abdulla, from Wad Medina, capital of the Blue Nile Province. The other two were Othman Zeyad, chief of the merchants of Wad Medina, and Siddik Esee, a merchant from Omdurman, the the city on the other side of the "Father of Rivers."

After being presented to the sheiks, the Doctor explained the meaning of the names, which he had rattled off as glibly as Smith and Jones. Every Sudanese name has a meaning all its own. "Al Hagg" means "the Pilgrim"—one who has made the pilgrimage to

Mecca, which is incumbent on every good Moslem who can afford it. "Abou Musa" means "Father of Musa," while "Al Emam" signifies, in the Arabian tongue, the leader of worship in a Mohammedan mosque.

All six gave me their cards and autographs and post-office addresses in the native script and wrote their names in order upon the back of the crude menu. The signatures looked much like shorthand, but an interpreter laughingly informed me that Arabic must be read from right to left. I then tried to read the signatures backward, but for some reason it would not work.

Othman Zeyad, seeing my perplexity, smiled. "I'm afraid it's beyond you, rotund friend," he remarked in resonant Arabic.

* * *

In the shifting shadows of comparative shade, it was now becoming unbearably hot to one of my generous dimensions. Perspiration stood out upon my face and forehead like raindrops on a window pane, while tiny rivulets streamed down my nose like water over a Nile cataract. Mopping my forehead, I noticed that the chieftains seemed little affected by the heat.

Aly Abou Musa turned to the Doctor and continued:

"You were speaking of the Sudan situation. Did you know that many of the workers along the water-front in Port Sudan have allied themselves with the Egyptian government? The real story of today goes back more than a century. In January it will be forty years since the fall of Khartoum and the death of 'Chinese' Gordon. That is a story I know from personal observation."

The Sudanese historian then folded his arms and waited for the interpreter to catch up. "I was little

more than a child at the time and the excitement left a great impression upon my mind.

" 'Chinese' Gordon, as he was called, was in command of the city of Khartoum which, for nearly ten months had resisted a siege by an army of Mohammedans led by an Egyptian holy man known as the Mad Mullah.

"The followers of the Moslem finally broke through the barrage, razed the town and killed 'Chinese' Gordon. After removing to Omdurman, across the Nile, they resisted the British successfully for thirteen years until subdued by General Kitchener. The Sudan was placed under the administration of a joint government of English and Egyptians, which has functioned very well. Both countries were satisfied to maintain a divided interest in the land, which, at least half as large as the United States, is near the Sahara Desert and located entirely within the tropics. That accounts for the torridness which so oppresses you. It was not until England granted nominal freedom to the government of Iraq after the World War that the question of ownership of Sudan came into prominence. Insurrections, plots and counterplots culminating in the death of Sirdar Lee Stack, the Governor-General, were the order of the day. Sudan suffered greatly under the Egyptian rule and why some should have a desire to return to such a state is a mystery."

I nodded and the chief continued: "The answer is simple—for the most part, the generation which remembers Egyptian rule has died out, and it is at the present time among these youth that the alliance with Egypt is considered."

Siddik Esee, hailing from Omdurman, interrupted as the Doctor interpreted rapidly: "The rioting which

has taken place is confined to those who have not benefitted by what their fathers suffered. Egyptian agitators, I am told, have already won over many students in the Khartoum colleges."

Abou Musa carried on the chronicle while I mopped my face and removed my wilted collar. It was hot. The sun's rays were leveled directly at us and it was impossible to avoid its scorching heat. I relaxed in my chair, determined to remain motionless, for every movement I made brought a fresh shower of perspiration. My question was answered.

"There could be no thought here of handing the Sudan over to Egypt. Great Britain seemed ready enough to handle the matter conciliatorily. The Egyptians evidently felt that the British Government simply was not to be taken seriously when, under Premier MacDonald, the decision not to turn the Sudan over to Egyptian rule was firmly announced."

I turned to Mahmud Barsee, whom the Doctor said was well informed on the history of Sudan, and asked him to give me his views. The Sudanese scholar smiled, showing his beautiful pearl white teeth, a pleasing contrast to the ebony of his skin. All six of the chiefs were evidently well educated, and each have had much in common with the British inhabitants and English-speaking visitors who lived in their respective cities.

"This land," said Mahmud Barsee, "now known officially as Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, is a vast territory lying between Egypt and the equatorial lakes, inhabited partly by Arabs, partly by Negro and Negroid tribes, who were conquered by Egypt in the early part of the nineteenth century. The region includes the ancient 'Cush' of your Bible and the 'Ethiopia' of the

classical writers. . . . Oh yes," he declared, smiling as I looked up in surprise when he made mention of the classics, "I've read Plato, Aristotle, Pliny, Plutarch, Caesar—why not? I read the Koran for spiritual guidance, but I study the classics for pleasure and inspiration. Neither Britain nor Egypt has any 'original' claim to the country; it is only since the last century that either nation has had any interest in it. Previously it had been controlled and governed by an Ethiopian dynasty."

He had his dates well in hand while I munched dates on the plate.

"In 1820 the Viceroy of Egypt, hard pressed for money, dispatched an expedition to Sudan which he had been led to believe was an extremely rich country. After a campaign lasting two years, the entire area was subjugated and an administration set up which had for its object the accumulation of wealth and the enrichment of the Egyptian treasury. Naturally, the Egyptian regime was one of oppression and despotism. From bleeding Sudan a steady flow of gold, ivory, and slaves was maintained. This state of affairs had its natural result in the revolt instigated by Mohammed Ahmed, son of Dongolawi, a native carpenter. In 1881 the son proclaimed himself El Mahdi—the Guide—a descendant of Mohammed and the deliverer spoken of in the Koran. He gathered a great and powerful band of his countrymen about him, and with the fury of a madman began his terrifying work."

Interested in the story, I had almost forgotten the fearful and almost intolerable heat when an Englishman close at hand broke out in an oath. "My God, it's hot!" he cried. Again I became conscious of the oppressive warmth. I mopped my brow, fanned myself

with a newspaper, and sprawled in my wicker chair while the sheik continued his story:

"The Egyptian administration in the Sudan, sapped of its energy, was incapable of coping with the howling 'dervishes.' This condition led to the fall of Khartoum, of which I have already spoken, and the tragic end of 'Chinese' Gordon in 1885, completing the last sad chapter of Egyptian misrule in Sudan."

With a reminiscent look in his eyes he went on:

"For ten years—and I remember them well—the country south of Wadi Halfa was left in the hands of dervish hordes who succeeded Mohammed Ahmed at his death. During this period Egypt was busy straightening out its own affairs. Financial difficulties beset the country following the wild extravagances of the Viceroy, but in 1890 the race against bankruptcy had been won and the nation then turned its attention to development work."

A native waiter came out on the veranda at this moment and suggested iced lemonade. The very thought of cracked ice brought me out of my Sudanese lethargy. "And now," continued Barsee, "comes the real crux in the question of the Sudan. The life-giving waters of the Nile, which run through this enormous area of perhaps two million square miles of the Sudan, are important to the territory bordering on the river. Before this moderately elevated region, diversified with extensive open or rolling plains, level plateaux, and highlands such as those in the Southwest, this land could be of no real value without water. Expensive irrigation and other development systems could not be undertaken while the Sudan remained in the hands of the Mad Mullah's successors, and irrigation was necessary, as there is no rain from October to May.

Othman Zeyad, chief of the merchants at Wad Medina, here interrupted. "While serving in the Egyptian army on one of the campaigns, Kitchener defeated the Sudanese and set up a temporary government. The question of a definite form of government was finally settled upon. Sudan was given over to an administration functioning under a condominium or partnership agreement, which retained for England a paramount influence in the practical administration of the Sudan."

For a few minutes the party was silent as we contentedly sipped from our glasses. The startling scene before me made its first impression upon my mind. I had been too busy trying to keep cool and follow the Sudanese story being translated in shorthand notes to notice the picture that now rewarded my glance. The Nile and the desert seemed a motionless painted picture that reminded me of the magic blue of Maxfield Parrish's pictures that hung over the old Knickerbocker bar on 34th Street in pre-Volstead days, that was counted one of the choicest bits of modern art outside the galleries. The sky was a brilliant orange, presenting a marked contrast with the yellow sand and the blue waters of the Nile. Again I began to feel the lure of the Orient, the fascination of the tropics that leads men on and on into the hazards of torrid zones in darkest Africa.

CHAPTER XVIII

In the Midst of the Age-Old Egyptian Problem and Interviewing More Native Sheiks

XLVII

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in the Nothing all Things end in—Yes—
  Then fancy while Thou art, Thou art but what
Thou shalt be—Nothing—Thou shalt not be less.

XLVIII

While the Rose blows along the River Brink,
With old Khayyám the Ruby Vintage drink:
  And when the Angel with his darker Draught
Draws up to Thee—take that, and do not shrink.

XLIX

'Tis all a Chequer-board of Nights and Days
Where Destiny with Men for Pieces plays:
  Hither and thither moves, and mates, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

L

The Ball no Question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Right or Left as strikes the Player goes;
  And He that toss'd Thee down into the Field,
He knows about it all—*He* knows—HE knows!

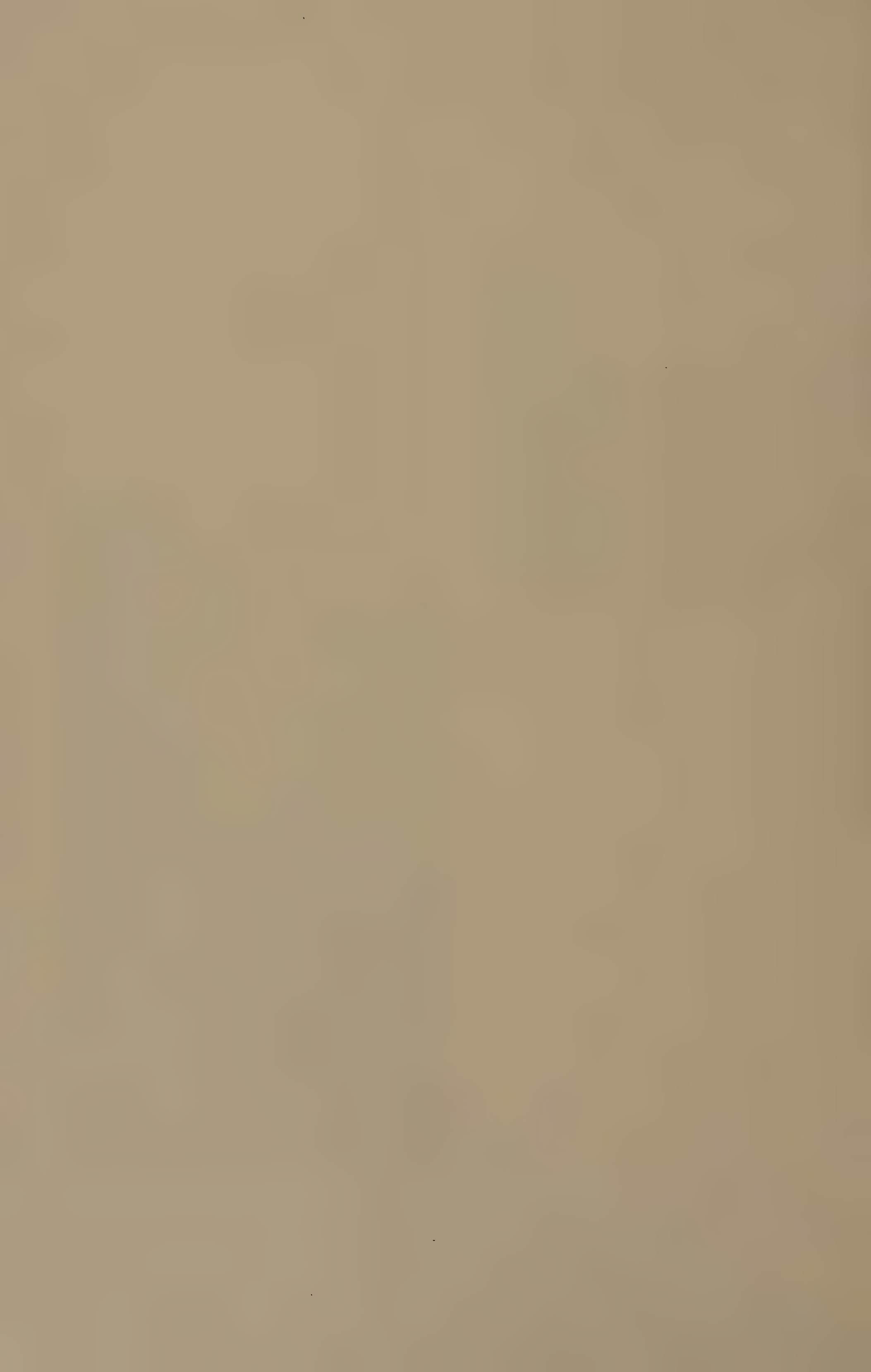
From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*



A "step street" in Bethlehem, with a glimpse beyond of the terraced fields, where shepherds watched their flocks by night. One of the orphanages of Near East Relief is located on this hillside



Bethlehem is a village of narrow streets and quaint old shops, full of the glamor and romance and color of the Near East



CHAPTER XVIII

SITTING on the verandah of the Grand Hotel at Khartoum, with the six Sudanese sheiks, now my traveling companions, I gazed out at a sea of purple splendor, the fair sky of the Orient. We had been discussing conditions in the Sudan. My inquisitions with regard to the region, one of the Sudanese declared, proved that I was an American. Their good-natured answers to my questions were taken down in stenographic notes in English as translated by the Doctor—the Pitman characters looking like Arabesque jazz.

The Sudan is traversed by railroad and steamer, while a telegraph system covers the country. Every province has its hospital, its school and similar institutions. The Sudanese are allowed a part in the administration of affairs and hold minor positions in the government. The country shows an annual surplus in its budget. No better example of government by the consent of the people, it was his belief, can be found than that accorded by the present administration of the Sudan.

"I understand," I said, when he paused, "that agriculture is your hope, first and last?"

"Yes," he declared, "cotton, maize, several kinds of durrah or sorghum, hemp, tobacco, gourds, watermelons, indigo—which grows wild, as well as in cultivation. The kola nut, which here takes the place of the coffee berry, are raised rather extensively." He smiled. "You weren't aware at breakfast this morning that it was not coffee but kola you were drinking, were you?"

Now I was interested in getting "close-up" information on the unsettled political affairs. One question above all else I desired to have the chief answer, and yet, because of his position, it was a difficult thing to put properly. But finally I managed to ask:

"Do you feel that England is a real friend to the Sudan?"

Siddik Esee smiled benignantly. "We have just returned from London," he declared. "Naturally, I feel that England has done much for the benefit of the Sudan, and I am inclined to agree with the stand taken by the average person of British blood."

"And what is that?" I inquired.

"The average Englishman," the chieftain continued, "smiles at Egypt's contention to ownership in the Sudan," he declared. "He denies that Iran has any claim to sovereignty in the country and he bases his belief on two major facts: First, that Egypt's claim is neither good at law nor in equity. Egypt lost the Sudan forty years ago after a long period of misgovernment. When the dervish administration was overthrown in 1898," he declared, "it was England, perhaps more than Egypt, to whom credit was due for the event. The brunt of the fighting fell upon the British and Sudanese units. The Egyptians had as much chance of winning back the Sudan as the Spaniards had of winning back their ancient empire colonies in America.

"Under the condominium, you must remember, the real responsibility was vested in England," continued the chief, "and it is admitted that England has done well by all parties and that whatever was done for the good of the Sudan also accrued to Egypt's benefit. Zaghloul Pasha's statement that the Sudan forms a

part of Egypt and that she cannot live without it is an ages-old dream. Egypt has need only of the Nile, and there has been no question raised as yet as to her right to it."

Here Siddik Esee revealed his methodical way of reaching a conclusion.

"Secondly, the belief that there is a difference of opinion upon the question in England of Egyptians is entirely wrong. When Egypt was struggling for its freedom there was naturally a difference in view, but so far as the Sudan is concerned, British officials have, since the signing of the condominium, held the important positions and determined policies; Egypt's part has been merely the provision of the bulk of the army and the maintenance of order. As to the country's development under the present administration, I believe my companions will agree that it has been remarkable." The other chieftains nodded. The merchant from El Obeid, Mohammed Ahmed Al Emam, who had hitherto been silent, now spoke:

"When the re-occupation was under way, the manner in which the country had been ravished became evident. It had suffered first under the hands of the Egyptians, and later of the dervishes. Immediate measures for relief and rebuilding were necessary and it was British money that went into the reconstruction of the Sudan. A vast waste of desert land was taken over and developed into a country with an efficiently working administration, a complete system of law and courts, real public security and good railroads, while steamers ply between Khartoum and Rejof, one thousand miles up the White Nile on the long, long trail to Cape Town."

How instructive to note the preparations for the

future—the gathering together of the stage properties all along this route, the drawing energy for a stupendous spectacle of the awakening of the dark continent. The drawing energy, the feverish activity to materialize the dream of an empire inspired by that most remarkable of all empire builders, embodied in the slogan, "Cape to Cairo—Cecil Job Rhodes"; on to where the tomb, hewn in the living granite of the Matoppo Mountains, are inscribed the words:

"So little done—so much to do."

The Sudanese chief was loath to talk of his recent activities in London, but he spoke of the affairs that were taking up the government's time while he and his friends were there. They were in England about the time that Zaghloul was there.

"In 1920," he continued, "the Milner Commission excluded the Sudan from discussion on the grounds that it was a country entirely distinct from Egypt in character and constitution. In his 'Declaration to Egypt,' Lloyd George said, in 1922, that Great Britain could never agree to any change in the status of the Sudan which would in the slightest degree diminish the security for the many millions of British capital which has been invested there.

"When Zaghloul Pasha became Premier, he seemed to have forgotten everything that was previously said with regard to the Sudan. He planned to go to London to negotiate about its status, but before he was willing to make the trip he conducted much correspondence with Premier Ramsay MacDonald. He could not be too fervently assured that the scope of the discussion with regard to the Sudan would be unrestricted. Many times reassured, he was finally making



Church of The Nativity, in Bethlehem—the oldest church in Christendom—which occupies the traditional site of the stable where Christ was born. The Franciscans, the Greek Church and the Armenians each have a share in the care of the sacred shrine in the Grotto, and the British, now the masters in Palestine, keep a military guard over the Grotto, as the Turks did for hundreds of years previously to prevent trouble between the sects



ready for the trip when, in the meanwhile, Viscount Gray, the Liberal Foreign Minister, made a statement to the effect that it was the British who recovered the Sudan, and urged the government to make it clear that the question was one between the British and the Sudanese, and something in which the Egyptian government has no say at all. He declared further that some arrangement would be made by which Egypt could be assured of having all the water needed from the Nile.

"In reply to this, Lord Parmoor, the President of the Council, speaking for the government, declared that it would not abandon the country in any sense."

* * *

I remembered this statement and the uproar it caused in Egypt. I had visited Cairo and had interviewed Zaghloul and was leaving the country when the excitement in Cairo broke out. Zaghloul Pasha resigned. "We cannot abandon the Sudan," he proclaimed, "not because it is a colony, but because it is part of ourselves, the source of our life, because Egypt cannot live without the Nile and the Sudan. Force compelled us to abandon part of it. We evacuated reluctantly, but took it again at the price of heavy sacrifices of blood and money. After all the millions spent and the blood shed—knowing our very existence depends on the Nile, we can never, unless we become a dead nation, abandon to others the slightest part of the Sudan."

When I reminded the Sudanese of Zaghloul's statement they nodded in acquiescence. "Yes," said Ahmed Al Emam, "and he also called attention to the fact that he repeatedly repudiated the declaration of

February, 1922. At that time he declared that unless he could negotiate on another basis than that of the declaration recently made he would resign, and this he did. The Chamber voted confidence, and the King refused his resignation, and so he held on."

It was nearly high noon and the heat of the sun was intolerable. There was scarcely a ripple of a breeze stirring. On the verandah many of the guests lay half dozing in their easy chairs, motionless, yet unable to sleep. It was an effort even to breathe. In the street below pariah dogs were lying in the shadow of the hotel, immobile, panting. The usually friendly, buzzing flies lay lifeless wherever they had alighted.

I thought of those lines from the "Ancient Mariner":

> "As idle as a painted ship
> Upon a painted ocean."

The scene before me looked more like a painting in gorgeous colors than anything I have ever seen. There was not the least semblance of life visible—and yet, to the party of sheiks it was "home"—and Othman Zayad who had been in the United States, played a tune on a mouth organ to remind an American of "the land of the free and home of the brave."

Feeling was running high when Zaghloul Pasha made his statement which was printed in all the Egyptian newspapers: "We have been asked to commit suicide, but we have refused!" When I commented on this, my friends smiled.

"It takes a great stretch of the imagination to understand that," Aly Abou Musa declared. "Egypt is taking a pessimistic view of the proceedings. The Egyptians have been assured the Nile will not be taken from them."

"What happened in England while you were there?" I inquired, hoping to get the real news.

"The crisis in Egypt," continued Musa, "led to a discussion in the British Parliament during which Ramsay MacDonald said he regretted the statements made to the Egyptian Parliament and the action taken to create trouble in the Sudan. He declared that he could interpret it only as an attempt to force his hand and deprive Zaghloul Pasha of liberty to negotiate. In view of what had happened, he did not believe that Parliament would accept any arrangement which would break England's pledges to the Sudan or jeopardize the British pledge to develop the region. He hoped, further, that both countries would refuse to countenance impossible demands which would destroy the prospects of an amicable settlement."

The veteran Zaghloul was still determined to fight the matter out and was on his way to London to attempt negotiations when the outbreaks led to the dispatch of British troops and warships.

* * *

What a sensation it gave me as I sat and chatted with these six Sudanese chiefs! I almost forgot the heat of the day in my desire to hear their stories and get information from them face to face, at first hand. I wanted some facts with regard to the country, and Siddik Esee, who seemed to be the statistical expert of the group, answered my queries.

"Population of the Sudan?" he repeated. "At the end of the Dervish era," he declared, "it was under two million. Today it is over six million and comprises every grade of African race, and tribes in every state of development. Only north of a line drawn east

and west of El Obeid, which is about two hundred and fifty miles from here, does one find any Moslems. The rest are for the most part pagan."

The many statements of Egyptians in which some kind of a bond between the people of Iran or Egypt and the Sudanese is alluded to is not confirmed either by racial, linguistic, or religious ties between the people of the Sudan. The haunting terror of the Sudanese is the fear of a return to Egyptian rule. I had noticed the difference between the two peoples. The Sudanese seemed more frank and open. There was not the same seriousness about them as there was about the people I had met in Cairo, Alexandria, and other Egyptian cities. The native here seemed more trusting on the one hand and more trustworthy on the other—all in all, more like our colored people in the United States.

Errahmin Abdulla, one of the merchants from Wad Medina, seemed to have a great interest in the history of his race, and interrupted me at this point to tell me some very interesting facts with regard to the negro.

"Did you know," he asked, "that Bilad és-Súdan, as the natives call this region, is regarded as the true home of the negro? The lower class of the population is still largely composed of these aborigines, although there is some mixture of foreign blood. The bulk of the Arab tribes have penetrated from the Nile Basin and they are still largely restricted to the central and eastern districts. Owing to their stronger racial sentiment, they have kept more aloof from the surrounding population and the result is that the present inhabitants of the Sudan are of a mixed character. There are more or less pure negroes, half-castes, Fulahs and Berbers spread over this vast area."

Gossip has a strange and almost incomprehensible manner of spreading in the Orient. One of the chieftains told me that during the reign of the Khalifa the markets were almost suppressed because of the fact that he knew the perniciousness of gossip and that the market was its hotbed. In public places in the Sudan, "There is nothing hidden which shall not be made known." The most hidden secrets are known and openly discussed. A stranger scarcely spends a day in Egypt or Sudan before the entire population knows who he is, where he comes from, how long he is going to stay, and the object of his visit. If a man commits a crime, he can be tracked by this gossip. I was told of a native who had some time before murdered one of his relatives and who was trailed from one of the boundaries of the Sudan through thousands and thousands of miles of desert land and mountainous regions to a small native village, where he was finally arrested and hanged. The Sudanese gossip is sure to find you out, so that it is a good idea if you have anything against you to keep away from the regions bordering the river Nile.

Cannibalism, I was told, was no uncommon occurrence during the Mahdist reign of terror. Matters came to such a state that children never dared venture out alone and even mothers were known to eat their offspring. When matters were in the worst possible condition it is said that a little girl once made her way to an American mission and asked protection from her own parent, claiming that the latter had already eaten her brother.

For years after this siege, fishing in the Nile near Khartoum and Omdurman was prohibited, for at that time the river was the great burial place of the region

and the eating of fish from its waters was to be avoided. Around many of the villages the hyenas were wont to enter the huts at night and drag off the half-dead people. All the land was reduced practically to a howling wilderness in which state it remained until the arrival of Kitchener. Although it was declared at the time that it would be a century and more before a recovery could be effected, the work carried on leaves but little to remind the tourist of the dread conditions that existed during recent generations.

As we sat talking a beggar, who had somehow managed to escape the guard at the door, came out upon the verandah and whined for "baksheesh." One of the Sudanese knew the man and whispered that in his youth the beggar had been a notorious professional thief, but that the inhuman punishment of the Khalifa had deprived him of the hand he needed so much in his business. Since then he had been forced to eke out an honest but precarious existence as a "baksheesh hunter." I gave the man a coin. Still unsatisfied, the beggar whined for more, and refused to budge. When the chiefs had contributed a coin apiece, he turned again to me, with a series of curses for not having given him more. It was necessary, finally, for one of the kavases to eject the man forcibly from the hotel.

Looking out over the Nile, my eyes swept the dreary panorama across the way. I thought of the missionaries who have willingly gone into the most desolate villages of the interior to preach the gospel and bring the milk of human kindness into the lives of the poor benighted natives. How these noble, altruistic souls have been ridiculed at the hands of press and public! They foster sanitation and hygiene. They have been belittled and made the butt of jokes by the motion-

picture producers, the producers of so-called "legitimate" attractions, and in short, by everyone who has ever wanted to "get a laugh out of the public" and a sneer at the religious faith of their country.

In my many years of wandering I have met many missionaries and invariably I have found many of them true nobility of mankind. You who laugh at the mere mention of the word, and enjoy the blasphemy and libel of the Sunday supplement notion of these hard and honest workers; you who live in comfortable homes and enjoy the luxuries of life in a delightful climate, do you think you can for a moment appreciate the life the average missionary leads here in the interior of the Sudan—of Africa? Imagine the desolate, dreary mud house, the blinding dust, the awful heat and scorching sun, the absolute isolation and exile from one's kind, the overpowering stillness that seems almost to shriek, the all-pervading loneliness when the day's work is done—and this regime continues day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, usually until Death comes to the rescue and releases the frail worker from all earthly obligations.

* * *

Stories are often told of the indolence of the native Sudanese, and in these stories this attitude of the natives is usually the subject for reproach. Although it is true that for the most part they are of a "lazy" disposition, it must be borne in mind that this is the result of the impossible torridness under which they live. The intensity of the heat is beyond description, and the visitor to the Sudan soon loses all desire to engage in any effort-consuming task. It soon becomes almost a task to eat, and one soon likes nothing better

than to lay down somewhere in the comparative shade and fall asleep—if he can do it.

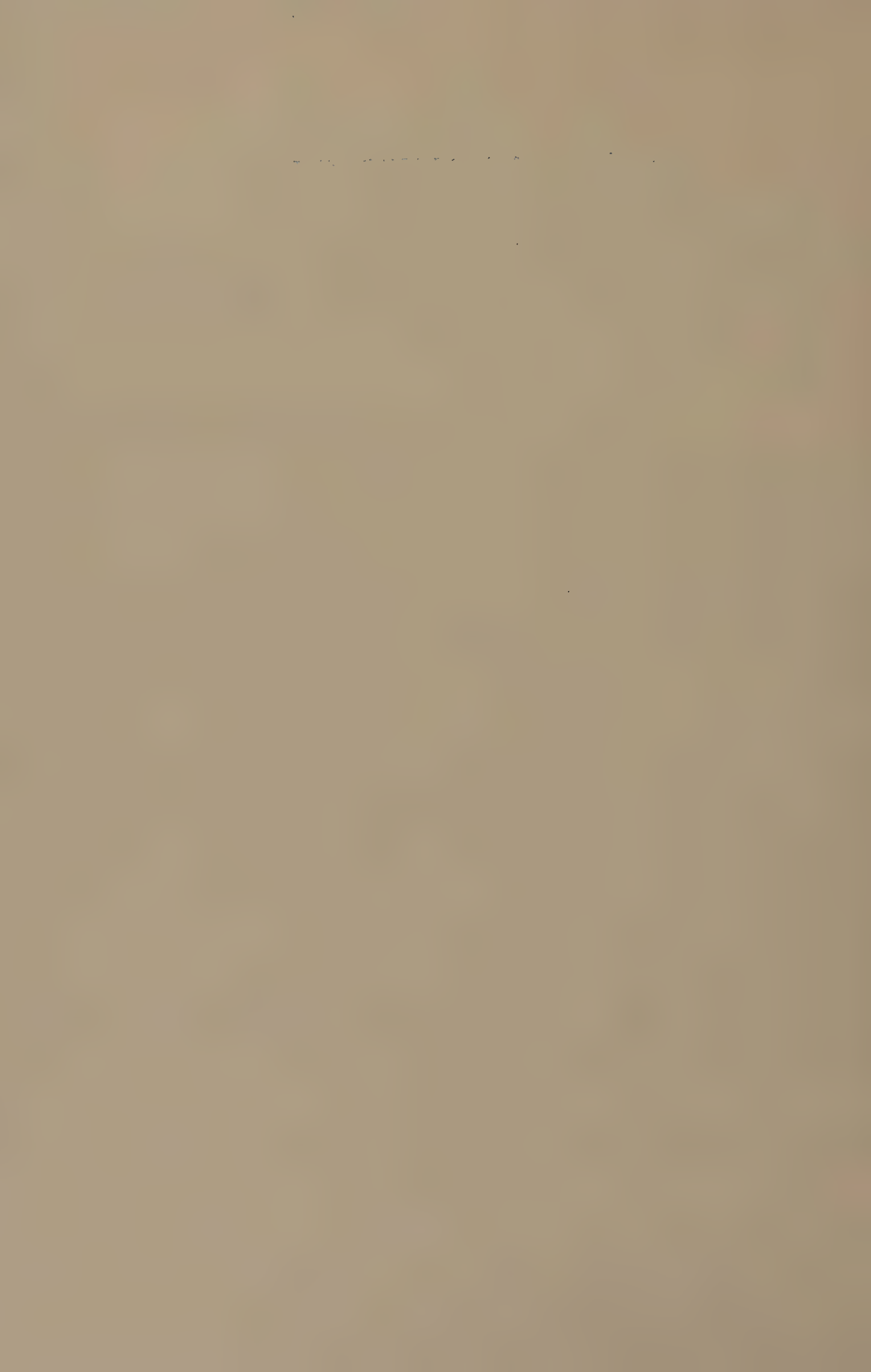
The population of the Sudan, divided according to their capabilities as workers, consists of three great classes. The first is the pure Arab, to whom manual labor has been unknown for centuries, and who looks down upon it. With proper training, the Arabs are being made into good workers. The second is the Negroid group, the members of which will work but little and possess the bad and but few of the good qualities of their progenitors. The third is the group of Blacks, indolent, without any ambition, and satisfied to live as their ancestors have lived—with just enough to eat. Their black skin protects them from the terrific heat which would kill a white man.

As I looked down from the verandah, a governmental officer whom one of the sheiks recognized, and who had just returned from an inspection of the military posts throughout the interior, was entering the hotel. He was accompanied to the door by a pair of Dinko natives who had come with him from the interior as porters. How he ever managed to entice them into carrying his possessions is more than I can understand, for they are averse to any kind of labor. But there they were, standing in their accustomed manner at the door, waiting for "jaal Duwong"—"the big man"—to return and pay them.

I was much interested in observing the manner in which they stood, for although I had heard of their peculiar method of "leaning" on one leg, I had never before had the opportunity to see it with my own eyes. The natives actually rested their weight on one leg, resting the other by placing the foot against the knee of the straight leg. Usually a spear is used as an



The Pool of Bethesda, at Jerusalem. In olden days it had five porches wherein lay a great multitude of the blind, deaf and the withered, waiting for the moving of the water. "For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had"



additional support, but in this case they were without implements of war, and made the best of their predicament by using a pair of broken-off poles they had evidently picked up by the waterside. This attitude, I think, owes its origin to the fact that the country which the Dinkos inhabit is swampy and unhealthfully damp, and that there it is usually impossible to rest in either a sitting or lying position.

I became interested in the sanitary conditions of the country and asked my friends about the diseases which I was told were so common. Again Siddik Esee answered my question.

"The diseases of which you speak," he said, "are prevalent only in the interior. In the more civilized sections, the germs have been almost exterminated. However, throughout the swamp regions where the tse-tse fly exists, "sleeping sickness" is the greatest of all the curses of Central Africa, and up to the present time, despite efforts of the scientist, no relief from its ravages has as yet been discovered.

"The fly which spreads the disease is itself quite harmless, unless it has first bitten some one with the disease, but thereafter it propagates the horror upon everyone, white or black, and once bitten, be it ever so slightly, the germ multiplies so appallingly that the victim is almost at once beyond all hope."

* * *

The symptoms of the disease are as strange as the manner in which the disease itself spreads. The victim first has a raging fever which usually lasts ten days or a fortnight, and is followed by a brief respite, after which the fever gets in its work again, and from that time on continues with the patient until the latter succumbs. A rash appears on the breast usually at this

stage and a lassitude ensues from which it is almost impossible to awaken the sick person. The latter drowses away and often falls into a profound sleep which, however, is far from natural. Often this is succeeded by paralysis of certain muscles of the mouth and throat from which the patient usually never recovers.

"Science has been diligently at work for a long time on this scourge of mankind," he continued, "but so far it has succeeded only in discovering the existence of the dread germ. In ten years, so deadly is the disease, it is said to have killed four hundred thousand persons on the borders of Lakes Victoria Nyanza and Tanganyika. The British government has for some time been fighting the disease by segregating its victims in hospitals and forcing all villages to be removed from the water fronts. The so-called 'Dum-dum' fever is another of the scourges which the health service must fight and against which it has long been carrying on a pitched battle. Within a few years, we hope, the health experts will have discovered some means of checking, or exterminating, the dread germs."

He also described the work that is being accomplished at the Wellcome Laboratories and the experiments carried on at Gordon College. Then our conversation naturally turned to a discussion of learning in the Sudan.

"The spread of education among my people has been slow but steady," continued Siddik Esee. "The country is being developed ahead of its population. Sudan is emerging with almost bewildering sureness on the steep slope of civilization." Then he went on to tell of the present organization of the government.

"At the present time," he declared, "the country is divided into forty-five provinces. In the capital of

each resides the governor—a British official, and you may understand that he 'dresses' for dinner every night. Each province is further divided into different districts and each district is administered by a British District Commissioner who has attached to his service several police officers who aid in his work. In this country the patriarchal system still flourishes and it would have been a hardship to the inhabitants and a difficult task for the government to have attempted to force an entirely new idea upon my people. Much of the administration is left in the hands of the tribal sheiks such as myself and my friends here. You will find that we are sympathetic and democratic with our people. More and more the government has come to recognize the fact, and we have been encouraged to handle the less important matters—and some of the more important also—in our own way."

When he had finished speaking he rose. "You have enough notes on Sudan now to fill a book," he declared. "You are a writer, aren't you?"

I modestly admitted the soft impeachment.

"It's noon," he said, at length, as he took my hand. "Let me conduct you to a Sudanese feast."

As the remaining five sheiks arose, I arose with them, and in single file we followed Siddik Esee, one of the blackest men with the whitest of souls, downstairs to the cafe, where we broke bread together.

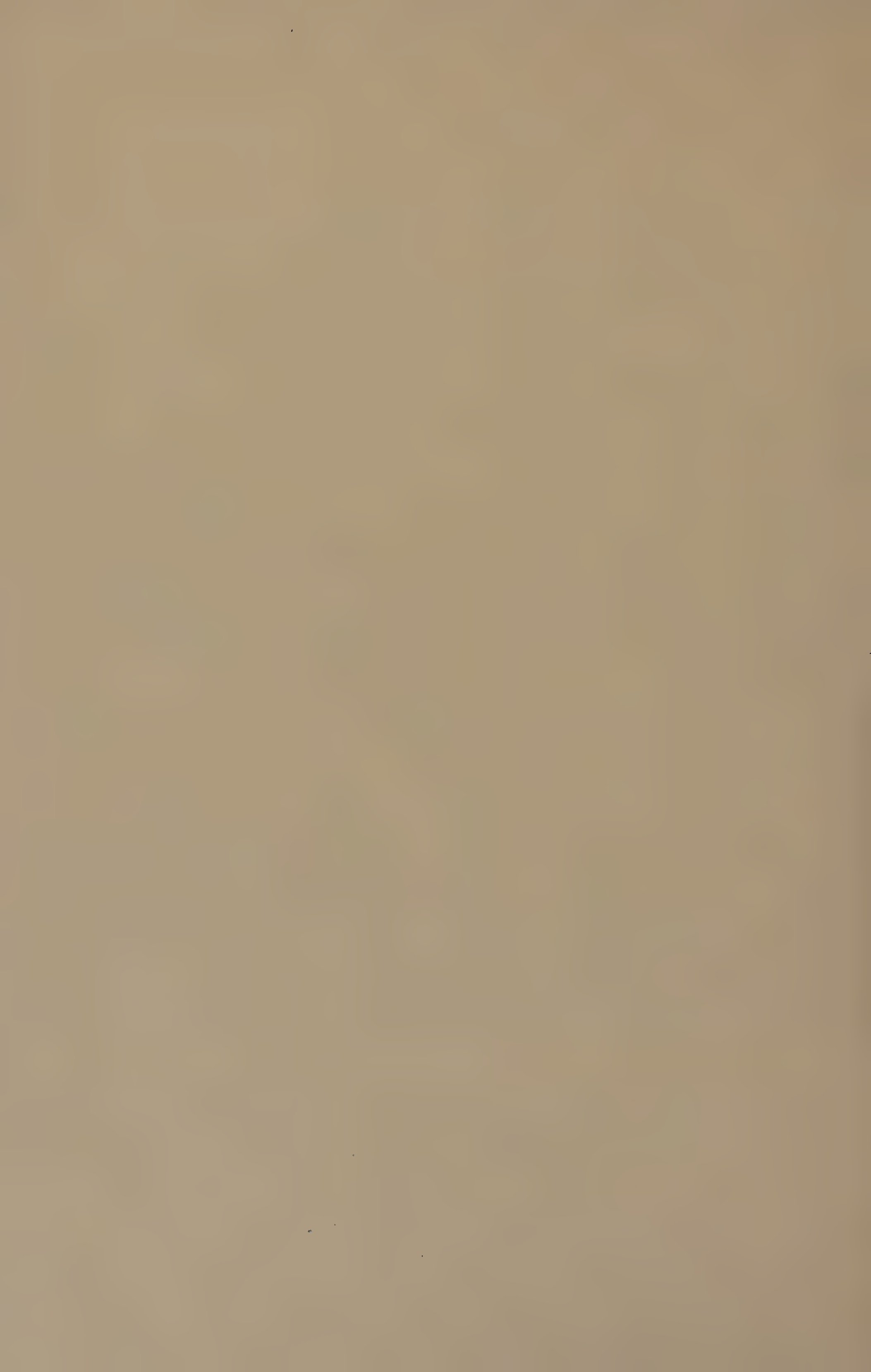
While we were at the table, I again mopped my massive brow and unconsciously remarked, "It's hot!"

"You made that observation before," said Siddik, smiling. "Do you Americans always talk about the weather? Strange as it may seem, the Arabic word 'hot' is scarcely ever used. We just feel the heat and say nothing—and that is, you will find, the most sensible way of keeping cool."





Market Place in front of the Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem. This scene, in all of its essential details, is but little different from what it might have been a thousand years ago—but modern progress cannot be stayed. Commercialism is pressing upon the lands where the greatest epic of human history was written, and the automobile, the symbol of modernity, chugs along unmindful of desecration where the lordly camel has trodden for three thousand years



CHAPTER XIX

At Khartoum, where the White and the Blue Nile Meet and Chinese Gordon Paid the Supreme Sacrifice

LI

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all thy Piety or Wit
  Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.

LII

And that inverted Bowl we call The Sky,
Whereunder crawling coopt we live and die,
  Lift not thy hands to *It* for help—for It
Rolls impotently on as Thou or I.

LIII

With Earth's first Clay They did the Last Man's knead,
And then of the Last Harvest sow'd the Seed:
  Yea, the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

LIV

I tell Thee this—When, starting from the Goal,
Over the shoulders of the flaming Foal
  Of Heav'n Parwin and Mushtara they flung,
In my predestin'd Plot of Dust and Soul.

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

CHAPTER XIX

KHARTOUM is a name that fixes itself in the mind, no matter how little you may know about the geography of the surrounding country. It is the magic "K," a picture and distinctive letter in the Arabic alphabet, and is utilized in America in the cognomen of Kalamazoo, Kankakee, Oshkosh, Kokomo, Kakagon and Ku Klux.

Arriving at Khartoum, the tourist is not impressed with the sights. The dominating impression is just atmosphere. You hear the summer day refrain of New York that the thermometer reads one hundred in the shade. "It is hot!" You never feel it is necessary to use the superlative to express the degree of feeling in Khartoum. You know why palm leaf fans are used in the palm country, and far-away memories of Palm Beach and Florida with stretches of sand come to mind.

We visualize places through people. My first thought in Khartoum was of Kitchener. There is magic in the alliteration "Kitchener of Khartoum." I saw again that tall form with grim face and drooping mustache that I had seen riding a small horse, with feet almost touching the ground, in the coronation pageant at London, while little "Bobs," the late Lord Roberts, the prophet of the World War, was mounted at his side on a big brewery horse. Curiously when you arrive at far-away lands you compare the scenes with those in other countries. I thought of the flat-top roofs of the new Spanish architecture that is springing up in Miami, and again of Kitchener in his fathomless tomb

in the icy seas off Scapa Flow, instead of the sands of Sudan, which he held for the British Empire.

In the torrid zone of that vast region of which the White and Blue Niles are the symbols of life, I felt that I knew the colored race better than ever before. Not so many years ago, Sudan was the center of the slave traffic of the world. From an airplane skirting the Nubian Desert and sweeping over parts of the extensive region of the Sudan, the tourist gains a new appreciation of the progress which has been made by the colored people in the United States. As a race, the negroes in America have advanced at an astonishing pace when one compares the wretched conditions a century or so past under which their forefathers lived in the Sudan.

Mention Sudan in the U. S. A. and the average individual blinks. A blank expression is usually the answer to any question concerning the region. Few Americans know its approximate geographical location, its history, its topography. The school boy fresh from his lessons may be able to tell you that the vast country which has in recent years been a bone of contention between two great nations is located "somewhere in Africa."

The present generation in America may have almost forgotten the heroic story of the ill-fated "Chinese" Gordon and of Kitchener of Khartoum.

After a journey of a thousand miles from Cairo, Egypt—about the distance from New York to Chicago—traveling almost directly southward up the Nile, the traveler finds himself within the borders of the historic city of Khartoum. Here, surrounded by colored people, whose ancestors could they but speak would tell of the glorious days of ancient Ethiopia and of King

Solomon's mines, the American somehow feels much closer to the Sudanese than to other Oriental races.

Strolling on the encampment above the river, I caught the first hot blasts of the famous city where Gordon met his death. The Blue Nile was a most welcome sight after the stifling railroad trip. Across the way, amidst a veritable forest of billowing trees, rose the bleak roofs of the city, while to the right, on the banks of the White Nile, was the shadowy outline of the Arab City of Omdurman. Beyond, like a brilliantly-painted theatrical "drop," was the desert, crimson with its reflection of the rising sun.

Taking the ferry to the hotel, we passed the city for a quarter of a mile on our way. To the left, on the Blue Nile, rises the tower of Gordon Memorial College. Not far away is the palace in which General Gordon met the oncoming horde and where he suffered the fatal spear thrust of the natives. Back of all this lies the native town with the towering spire of the great mosque built afterward by the English.

* * *

On first sight the tourist is not much impressed with Khartoum, shaped like an "elephant's trunk," and situated where the White and Blue Niles meet. The former flows on the Sudan side and the latter, rushing toward Uganda, veering off toward Abyssinia. "Atmosphere there is in abundance and hot stuff," remarked Smith of Syracuse, a stray lone tourist. Except in the early morning, just after the sun rises, and in the late evening following its setting, the heat is terrific. It is always cooler along the banks of the river, but the warnings of the treacherous sunstroke come thick and fast.

While disporting in anticipation of a refreshing bath at my hotel, The Grand, a hoarse roar that seemed to come from just outside my window startled me. I called a native kavass and asked the cause of the disturbance. It was the roar of a lion in a neighboring garden. I had hardly calmed my fears when the stillness was again disturbed by a demoniacal laugh that fairly made my hair stand on end. In a moment I



realized what the guffaw meant. The Orient is indissolubly connected with the omnipresent donkey, "the jazz band of the Levant." I had heard the sound long enough in my travels through the East so that it should have caused me no distress. Everybody in Khartoum seems to have at least one of these little animals, as we have cats and dogs about the house. No sooner does one tune up—and what a song it is!—than other members of the donkey's union take up the refrain.

As the long day came to a close and the stars began

twinkling like constant friends in the sky, I was shown the famed Southern Cross sparkling in the heavens. The Great Dipper, which I am wont to find at home, was low on the horizon.

The native city had retired to rest and left the world "to darkness and to me."

In the morning, aroused by the braying of the donkey chorus, and feeling like a big game hunter, I went out on the verandah. The morning air was bracing; had just the right tang and made one feel fit for living. The waters of the Blue Nile were beautiful in their sheeny brilliance; even the vast expanses of the desert seemed pleasant in comparison with their appearance during the heat of the day. The low skyline of Omdurman stood out sharply defined in the clear air of the morning.

There was something in the shadows that told of a Khartoum that has grown up in the aftermath of a tragedy. In 1821, when Mohammed Ali's son and General Ishamil Pasha were the guests at a feast in the palace, the Egyptian officers were burned to death, the palace having been set afire by the treacherous Sultan of Nubia, who was his host. Mohammed Ali sent a new army which destroyed Shendi and founded Khartoum, which then succeeded the destroyed city as the capital of Upper Nubia.

About twelve hundred and fifty feet above the sea, Khartoum is laid out according to an imposing plan, with many wide streets leading away from the esplanade on the river and intersected by others equally as wide. The capital of Sudan recalls Washington. Some of the buildings are stately, and Gordon College, the Palace, and the Mosque are imposing structures.

A tiny steam train runs down to the ferry for

Omdurman and is usually crowded with natives enjoying themselves to the utmost. They grin at the visitor in the most congenial fashion.

In the palace of the Sirdar is contained the court famous as the shrine of the martyr, General Gordon. A bower of beautiful trees and playing fountains commemorates the spot where the General fell. From the rear entrance we go out into a wide avenue near the end of which stands one of the most stately monuments I have ever seen. Mounted upon a camel sits the hero who for months watched and waited for the succor that came all too late. Facing toward the desert, his eyes seem to scan the horizon for the reinforcements he hoped would arrive in time to save his garrison.

There were several native women bent in prayer before the statue recalling the story concerning the erection of the monument, at which time it is said the Sudanese gathered about, half believing that "the good Pasha" had returned to protect them from further invasions. The graven face gave no signs of life, the features which always had worn an expression of tenderness and sympathy relaxed not for a moment. The worshippers finally faded away, weeping bitterly, realizing that it was but an image.

Everywhere throughout the city are Greeks, who seem to be the traders of the land and most royally disliked. They sit, squat-fashion, in the shadows before the cafes and beneath the arcades,—a thoroughly unpleasant, humble lot that reminds one of Dickens' Uriah Heep—eternally washing their hands in oceans of visible humility. They step up close and peer leeringly into your face, and I can never look into their evil-looking visages without feeling glad that it is broad daylight and that I am not alone.

The heat is terrific and even such a short walk as that across the wide square is dangerous to the white man without head covering. As a rule, if he has had experience with the eastern tropical sun, he pauses for a moment to get his wind, and then scurries across the open space to the shelter of the arcades. From this point is visible the great mosque which the English government has built for the Moslems, and the park close by the palace.

* * *

The commercial center of Khartoum lies back from the river, bordering very wide streets, along which are some fine buildings with up-to-date stores. In Maling's growing drug store there was evidence that the proprietor had been in America. He knew the value of show windows. The wind, like hot blasts from Hades, and the heat forced us back toward the bank of the Nile. Away from the river, the city named for "The Elephant's Trunk," presents a lonely aspect. Narrow, tortuously winding streets and bazaars, with their conglomeration of peoples and merchandise so typical of ordinary Oriental towns is missing. It is a town of wide-open desert areas.

The blue waters of the Nile murmured musically below the verandah where we sat, while here and there a tattered sail drifted lazily along. Straight ahead a green plain stretched out to the point at which the White and Blue Niles join in their northward course to the sea. In the distance the burning yellow sands stretch away on both sides, shimmering in the parching glare of the sun.

Looking down the Nile, I became aware of the smoke of a slowly creeping steamboat that, now as I listen, I can hear faintly whistling in the distance, bringing

memories of the Old South and the cotton packets leaving Memphis.

Now for a trip to Omdurman, the famous city of the Mahdi across the river. Some of the donkey members of the "jazz band" were hitched to rickshaws in which we were to travel in state to the ferry. The donkey boy amused himself by beating a tattoo upon the animal's rump with his stick. If the boy ceases, the flea-bitten burro is apt to seat himself on his haunches.

Boarding the puffing little steamer, we skirted the banks of the river, where remain some of the low, crumbling mud fortifications over which the Arabs poured in the days of the siege of Khartoum. On the left bank of the river lies the long, low straggling skyline of a city of which the world has heard—Omdurman, the city of the Mahdi and Khalifa. Low mud walls stretch northward for a great distance and beyond stands a solitary hill overlooking the field upon which Islam received its greatest defeat in history.

Mud houses fringe the river, on banks which rise gently from the water's edge. When the guide spoke of "mounts," I expected to find horses or camels awaiting us, but we were met by a number of black boys, each leading an undersized burro with a queer, high saddle. I looked at the donkey in front of me and sympathized with him. Imagine a two-hundred-and-thirty-pound human being astride a rabbit-sized burro, and you have a picture of my "conquest" of Omdurman.

Down a long street bordered by yellow walls canopied by a deep blue sky, there was scarcely a sign of life. The donkeys pattered along paths once occupied by the tribes of the Khalifa, who brought them in from the desert. Close by are the prisons of the Mahdi, fast falling into decay.

The Mahdi's tomb, which lies along the route, is a small structure about fifty feet square. Nothing remains of it today but mud walls. Once it was adorned by an imposing dome. On the evening of the Battle of Omdurman, a few British artillery men trained their guns on it unknown to the officers and sent a few shells through the dome. Kitchener was furious but never did discover the perpetrators. This I learned in Florida from an Irish veteran of the Boer War, who was courtmartialed in Capetown for fighting in a barrack room with one of that gun crew. The Mahdi, the guide insisted, in pidgin English, was a thorough scoundrel, neither Moslem, Christian, nor anything else. In public he was the most religious, the most pious of all holy men. Although he had but four lawful wives, he had an infinite number of concubines, and it is said that at his death at least thirty women stood about him keeping the torrid air in motion with their waving ostrich plumes, trying to flash the widow's grief.

When the Mahdi was prepared for burial, the native women sprinkled the shroud-wrapped corpse with perfumes, then everyone present threw a handful of earth into the open grave, exclaiming as the rite was performed, "O merciful, O gracious God!" He left behind him tens of thousands of murdered human beings and countless devastated towns. Poverty, famine and death reigned on all sides.

A short distance from the tomb of the Mahdi stands the house of his successor, the Khalifa, now the quarters for one of the civil officers. How these officials endure the life here is beyond me, but they furnish an example of English devotion to duty.

The Khalifa had as his interpreter and unofficial jester a German, whom my guide called Slatin Pasha,

who suffered the vicissitudes which only one of his race could suffer and still grin and bear it. One day he is the Khalifa's right hand man, the next he is forced to run beside his master's horse, barefoot through the burning sands. The Khalifa made him assume the Moslem faith and forced twenty of the ugliest hags in Omdurman upon him as his wives, as a huge joke.

The inhuman ruler was very fond of various methods of torture, one of which was (playfully, of course) to cut off one hand and one foot of his victims. Even today one sees some aged beggar hobbling about and displaying the stumps of arms and legs which no doubt were cut off by the Khalifa's experts.

As we rode out toward the desert from Omdurman, I had my first view of an approaching sand storm. For several hours the wind had been howling over the desert. In the distance was an ominous rolling cloud, not unlike our midwestern "twisters." It grew rapidly and seemed to move with the speed of a hurricane across the desert in our direction. The guide immediately ordered us to turn about and we hurried back toward the city.

As we made for shelter the sand began to blow up about us in whirlpools. The sky was gray with the sand clouds, through which now and then the sunlight shone as on a hazy morning back home in the fall. In the city we did not suffer. The cutting particles of sand, much like the snow in a Dakota blizzard, swirled in eddies and billows. Within a few minutes the worst of the storm was over and we were ready to return to Khartoum.

Passing the market place, my burro stopped and refused to go on. He seemed convinced that this should

be his last resting place, and he attempted to sit down, but a sharp crack across the rump caused him to change his mind. He trotted steadily ahead, his long ears indicating supreme disgust.

A group of jet black Sudanese at the ferry, who evidently had a keen sense of humor, giggled at the sight of a burly editor on this tiny mount. The native women were dressed in white and bedecked with jewelry. The sight of this swarm of negroes brought forcibly to my mind the remembrance that Khartoum was in days gone by the principal slave mart in Africa, where the trade was always brisk.

Crossing the river, the battlefield of Omdurman slowly faded away in the endless desert sea. After dinner I turned in for a rest. I had almost fallen asleep when the donkey band beneath my window renewed its serenade, and later in my slumbers I heard braying jazz musicians with donkey's ears assembled in my bedroom for a symphony of hee-haws. It brought to mind a scene from Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream," for these donkeys of my dozing visions walked on two legs.



CHAPTER XX

Over the Route from Cairo to Cape Town, the Dream of Cecil Rhodes—Stories of the Equatorial Interior of Africa

LV

The Vine had struck a Fibre; which about
If clings my Being—let the Súfi flout;
Of my Base Metal may be filed a Key,
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

LVI

And this I know; whether the one True Light,
Kindle to Love, or Wrath—consume me quite,
One glimpse of It within the Tavern caught
Better than in the Temple lost outright.

LVII

Oh Thou, who didst with Pitfall and with Gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestination round
Enmesh me, and impute my Fall to Sin?

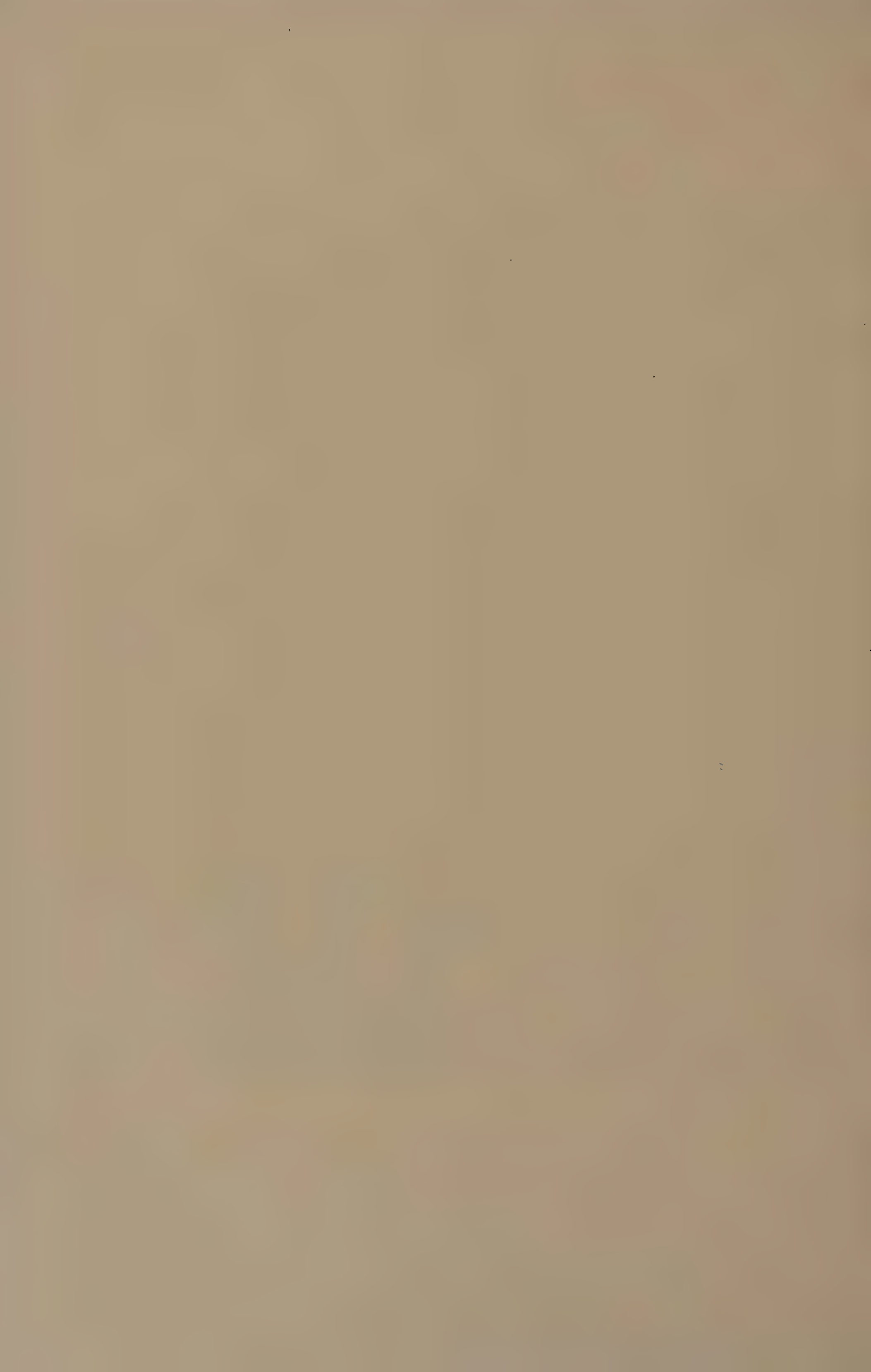
LVIII

Oh, Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,
And who with Eden didst devise the Snake;
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd, Man's Forgiveness give—and take!

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*



British Residency at Bagdad, on the bank of the Tigris River. Iraq, the youngest of the family of nations, is a kingdom created under a British mandate and includes old Mesopotamia. Under the guidance of the English experts detailed to guide the first uncertain steps of the infant nation it would seem not unlikely that this—one of the oldest countries of the world, now re-born—might throw off its age-old mantle of poverty and sloth and become a modern nation



CHAPTER XX

APPROACHING the equator, when it seemed as if Hades had turned on all the heat in creation, I thought of the late Theodore Roosevelt's adventures into the heart of Africa. His expeditions covered a region far south of my African wanderings, but it was at Khartoum that Roosevelt brought to a close his African travels. Since the war, big game hunting expeditions, for which the Dark Continent was famous, have not held the center of the stage. More attention is now given to agricultural and irrigation developments. Remarkable progress when we recall that it is less than three-score years since Henry M. Stanley set out on his great expedition following in the wake of Livingstone, the first white man to explore the Dark Continent. While only touching the fringe of the Sahara, I could sense the fact that intercommunication by motor and airplane is welding the continent into a cohesive unit.

In the scorching September sun I heard the stories of the Sobat. The weather was exceedingly hot, but the torridness failed to dampen our ardor—even if we did steam with perspiration. We were to make but a short trip southward, but realized how those who started out with Stanley a half-century ago must have sweltered in these wild jungles of the tropics.

Arrangements were made with a native skipper who hired a crew—at least our host called it such—and with camping outfits packed aboard we started off toward a region where missionaries had carried the gospel into the land of the Shullas. Again we felt the need of the

"puggaree"—to go without it or the helmet is fatal to whites, for the back of the head and neck must be protected from the sun.

Sailing along the Nile bordering on Khartoum, locations appeared to shift a bit. For a distance of about three hundred miles on the Nile the railroad runs from Atabra El Camer, the junction point on to Port Sudan. This is the port which makes Sudan independent of Alexandria as a seaport on the Mediterranean. The development in the Sudan has opened up millions of acres to cultivation; the dream of England is that Sudan and Egypt will at some time supply the cotton for the mills of England and of Europe.

Kitchener built the railroad cut-off saving the distance to Khartoum following the great bend of the Nile several hundred miles. The route from Abou Hamed to Wady Halfa on the border of the Sudan, where the second cataract is located, is not used for through traffic.

Traveling south even a short distance, I seemed under the spell of the dream of Cecil Rhodes in his plans for a railroad from "Cairo to Cape Town." The development of the airplane and the automobile has checked the building of railroads in the Orient. Sudan will remain a monument to the work of "Chinese" Gordon and the indomitable spirit of the British. Millions have already been expended in developing and millions more are ready to be poured into the development.

Far above Khartoum are the famous "sudds"—floating masses of weeds, growth from the trees from which papyrus, the earliest of all papers, was made by the Egyptians.

These dense masses of weed choke the river from bank to bank making it difficult to keep the channel clear.

Watermelons here seem as old as the region itself, and throughout Nubia the colored race have the same fondness for them as displayed in our own Southland—for the love of this juicy fruit is inherent in the blacks.

Although the scenery was far from enchanting, I found myself over and over again reveling in the blue sky, for in the Sudan it seems to have a lure for artists as a background. The romance of the days of King Solomon's mines brought to mind Rider Haggard, the author of "She"—now in Egypt—and visions of the pomp and wealth of those days of a long, long ago. The upper Nile, in vista, seemed snake-like, closely associated with the emblems of the ancient lands.

Yes, I even thought of George Washington's false teeth, which were said to have been made from African hippo molars. The tank wagon in Barnum's circus parade, where I saw my first hippopotamus, also was in the picture. The boat collided with one of the monster hippopotami (a hard word for me to spell in school) which the captain had not seen. Had the boat been a little lighter, or the hippo a bit stronger, we might have been food for the crocodiles. Now and again, from shore at night, we heard the hoarse roar of the lion. In several places tiny, timid gazelles appeared on the edge of the bank, and watched our progress with an enquiring eye. Once, far off in the distance, I caught a glimpse of a rapidly disappearing zebra, the beautifully-striped jackass of the jungles.

The crew subsisted entirely upon some sort of native bread that reminded me of giant griddle cakes. The cakes were flat and baked on a stone—purple in color—and looked like abandoned door mats. I only had the courage to nibble. The natives drank their "marisa"

from a gourd with the gusto of soda fountain devotees in rush hours.

En route there was no such thing as privacy. Many of the crew wore nothing but a gee string and seemed in no wise embarrassed by their nakedness—it made us think of the Broadway Reviews we had recently seen. The one woman in the crew—the cook—wore but a strip of white cotton cloth which was wrapped carelessly about her from waist to knee. She had her hair done up in countless little braids, seemingly tied together and smeared with grease that ran down her face when she sat in the sun as if to parboil and bring out all the charm of her figure in a beauty vapor bath.

In a region now void of population, our guide told us was once a large collection of native huts, but there are busted "boom" towns in Africa as in our own West. Farther on lived the Dinkas on the right and the Shullas on the left shore of the river. The disappearance to the south of these tribes was due to the frequent raids of slave hunters and the Baggara Arabs. At one place the foreman stumbled upon a nest of crocodile eggs, and gleefully fell upon them like an old-fashioned darky negotiating a chicken coop and "raising poultry." There were ninety-seven eggs in the batch. The Nile is so infested with these reptiles that bathing is out of the question.

* * *

Here again is heard that strange sort of telegraphic communication with drums between the natives in separated settlements. No sooner had our craft moored than there appeared upon the bank of the river a crowd of native warriors. All were equipped with spears and clubs for a special show, though they seemed friendly enough. They caught a glimpse of some silver coins

and Nile-colored legal tender, and they knew Americans were passing that way. Entirely naked, with their black, shiny bodies smeared with oil, they seemed as primitive as the aborigines of darkest Africa. As we passed among them, attempting to appear as cheerful as possible, they retained a sullen silence, but their eyes furtively followed our every move.

After we had unloaded our duffle, burnt away the grass and set up our tents, the shadows of night fell quickly and our visitors began to fade away somewhere. We were up early the next morning preparing breakfast, and the visitors began to return with a hungry look. Among them were a large number of women and children. Strange as it seemed to us after witnessing their nakedness of the previous day, both men and women now were clothed — comparatively speaking. The men wore loin cloths and the women were dressed in cotton sheeting. The change was incomprehensible to me until the guide informed me that there was an American mission in the region which had been founded by the Reverend Dr. Giffin, who had succeeded in encouraging the natives to wear some sort of clothing—at least when they were visiting—"for you must have pockets in which to keep your money." The commercial argument counted.

One of the natives approached another who seemed to be the leader of the party and said something about Jo-uk. The guide told me it was the native word for God, and that the day was Sunday. I was astonished at the man's knowledge until I learned that he was a Captain and expected some day to go to America.

That day a Prince visited us in a state far from princely. He rode a sorry-looking mule and was pre-

ceded by a native dressed in a strange assortment of clothes. Behind him were eight or ten men in various stages of dress—or undress. As he approached us, the Prince alighted and gave a startling whoop of welcome. Clad in a dirty silken robe, beneath which he appeared to have nothing but a cast-off shirt which scarcely reached below his hips, he was not the least bit bashful



and immediately asked for a drink of tea. After he had munched some food and more drink, he left with a smile and rode off surrounded by his retinue, smiling as if the joke was all on us—we were left to pay the check.

The natives in this region do little if any cultivating. Bamiyah and okra grow wild, together with a kind of mallow. They have been taught to raise tomatoes, sweet potatoes, some fruit trees and a bit of cotton, and they have learned to some extent—thanks to the work of the enterprising missionaries—the value of labor in the fields. The natives practice their own system of agriculture. The clearing for the most part

is done with a flat piece of iron in the shape of a circle, into one edge of which is fixed a wooden handle a foot or two in length. As they dig, they squat on the ground, catch the grass by the top and dig it up by the roots. This is all the preparation the ground receives.

Ants are the scourge of mankind in the region; they certainly understand team work and devour everything in sight. Nor did they stop at taking nips out of us humans, but crawled under and over our tents, got into our food and our clothing and made life almost unbearable.

The one great ambition in the life of the young Shulla seems to be to acquire a wife, or woman, as he speaks of her. Gradually, the mission is succeeding in teaching them the value of working and saving money. Many of them now own several domestic animals, and in their villages they have herds of cattle and flocks of sheep and goats in which they take great pride. Each village vies with the other in increasing the size of its possessions, for the natives are now realizing that labor brings a reward. In some places they are even producing more than they themselves need, and the economic factor of exchange and distribution has begun in supplying corn to the military posts.

In one village was an old chief who wanted to tell us of the atrocities which his people suffered from the Egyptian government. The guide said the agents of the Egyptians had visited these people many years ago. He began slowly, with his face toward Mecca, as the guide translated:

"The Egyptians told us 'Be submissive and we shall take care of you.' But they did not. They took our cattle and sheep, they burnt our homes, they carried

off our women and children. They made us a poor and sorrowing people.

"And then came the Mahdists who also promised us protection. But they were even worse than the Egyptians. They slew our men and carried off our women and children. We suffer no longer—the good men see that we are protected and we are learning to have much cattle and vegetables, and have food and we are happy."

The ears of the women are pierced at the top, and into the holes thus made are placed bits of wood, stalks of grass, or iron and brass rings. Sometimes these ornaments hang down to the shoulders. These are still new fads in adornment for modern women to discover. The front teeth of the lower jaw are extracted and there are no dentist bills. Taking out these teeth the native believes curbs the tendency to use abusive language. This custom is practiced by the men as well as the women.

The native dress of the women usually consists of a short apron tied about the waist and hanging to the knees. Over this is worn a two-piece costume consisting of separate goatskins tied together to reveal the apron beneath, and as much of the anatomy as they consider proper. The belles of the village are distinguished by the tiny bells they wear about their waists and which jingle pleasingly as they walk, making one think of a sleigh ride at Revere Beach in Boston on a summer's day.

The coiffures of the males are in various styles. Some shave their heads, leaving a "lock" at the top, which we now call a tango hair cut, reminiscent of the American Indians' "scalp-lock." Others shave the head completely. And so the style runs on. The

hair-oiled sheik with his well-slicked nob is entirely impressive. Invariably they pull out their beards by the roots. The hair is matted together in an inexplicable fashion that makes it look for all the world like a coarse black felt hat. They favor red hair and practice some native method of bleaching, which makes it straight and "spiney." With all styles of hair dressing they wear feathers like our American Indians. Now you understand why womankind usually insists on a feather on her hat—it is a basic, even if a barbaric, idea of adornment.

The jazz craze that permeates American hotels must have originated in Africa. They dance for hours in the same monotonous manner, at times yelling and screeching, and falling exhausted upon the ground. It is far from a "poetry of motion." These people dance with religious fervor and the old "steps" have been handed down from generation to generation.

The Shullas have a very intricate system of theology. They believe in a Great Creator whom they call "Jo-uk." But He is not the good and powerful God as we know him. While he gives life and takes it away, he is also the Spirit of Evil. They sacrifice and exalt him as a tribal deity, but do not worship him directly. Annually the priest of the tribe slays an animal with a holy spear, after which there is much drinking of "marisa" and more dancing, with no lounge lizards present. The temple is known as the "house of Nik-kang." When a man dies he goes with Jo-uk. If he has been wicked, Jo-uk will not admit him to his presence, and he ceases to exist. The greatest punishment known is to be obliterated.

Every Shulla village has a great corral in its midst into which the cattle are driven as night approaches.

A fire in the center is kept smouldering all night, and the smoke protects the cattle and the men who guard them from the ravages of the mosquitoes, which far surpass the New Jersey prize winners in size and capacity.

The people seem to subsist almost entirely upon a sort of fermented porridge. They never kill domestic animals, and what food they use is either game or fish, for there is a belief that domestic animals are sacred.

Divorce courts are unknown, for the wives are purchased at the market price, ranging from three to five head of cattle. Once purchased, the women are wives and not slaves. The exchange of cattle for a wife is a public marriage contract, but she must give her consent to the marriage. The women are respected in a way that is unusual among most native tribes. Suffrage for women would not be opposed on general principles except that plural wives would have to be given a fractional vote on the husband unit basis.

Around the native villages there were snakes, five, seven and even ten feet in length. One snake, particularly dreaded, has the power of squirting venom from its mouth, which, if it gets in the eyes, usually causes blindness. Lizards are present everywhere and are often found crawling on the rafters and the floor. Most of them are harmless and do great service in destroying flies and insects. Crickets disturb slumber, and bats often beat against one's body in their flight at night. Frogs likewise disturb the quiet in darkness and moths are prevalent. In other words one might call it as quiet and peaceful as the Bowery on a Jewish holiday. In the morning the birds, in gay plumage, sing their merry tunes. There is a myriad of vari-colored

birds which inhabit the region. One of these, a blue humming bird, is adorned with the softest and finest of velvet, its head, tail, and wings alone being of a drab gray. They were very tame and came to the tent for crumbs, chirping musically all the while. Starlings abound in great numbers and they are truly busy birds, following the cattle about, the sheep in particular, scolding all the while. The sheep seem to recognize them as helpful souls, for the animals are sometimes covered with the birds, who pick at the ticks and fleas in the fleece of the sheep the livelong day.

Tales of leopards, wildcats, and hyenas now and then making their appearance about the native huts were related to us, but we saw none. Antelope, warthogs, "sacred cows," and even lions and elephants, we were told, now and then appeared near the villages when they were pressed for drink or food, but they were now evidently having prosperous times in the jungle.

Altogether it seemed as if Africa is becoming a tame game country. Most of the harmless animals are protected by law and other wild beasts are rapidly being exterminated and in time will become as extinct as is the American buffalo, which once roamed the broad plains of the North American continent. The Sudan for many years seems to have been the kingdom of peace for all God's creatures. Here men and animals live side by side, doing little harm one to the other, as in our own Yellowstone and other national park reserves.

* * *

Sudan is an empire of contrasts. The river rises in flood times, rushing along and carrying a large amount of "float," or queer-looking islands, on which birds, frogs and reptiles and seemingly most of the passengers

of Noah's Ark are aboard. The air is filled with the pipings, crowings and hoarse grunts of these voyagers. It was like Ringling's menagerie let loose—for in far-off Africa I thought of my first circus. During the rainy season in Abyssinia rivulets flow down the hills, adding quantities of water to the already overflowing rivers rushing through thousands of miles of low lands. This was the graphic story told us of the Nile at flood tide.

Along the banks of the river are the ibis, of timid disposition, who are set all a-flutter as man approaches. Rising into the air, they "darken the heavens with their outstretched wings," and then alight in the trees, making them as snow white as a forest in New England after a sleet and snow storm.

Now I looked upon a different scene, as I smoked peacefully at night and counted the days when I would complete the journey "To Bagdad and Back." Before me the river was as smooth as oil, but beneath its placid surface I knew there were huge crocodiles and all sorts of slimy reptiles in its green waters that might make me dream of dragons—so I kept my thoughts on home on this last night in the wilds of Africa.

Now for my map again. In the north of Sudan is a wide expanse of desert. Near the Nile a narrow strip is redeemed from this condition by the life-giving waters. Rain scarcely ever falls in large areas and there is little or no vegetation. Many girls and boys we saw in this area had never seen the rain fall, and Sergeant Sandy McGregor of the party tried to teach them that marching ballad, indicating our high order of culture, entitled "It Ain't Goin' to Rain No More."

In the south rivers overflow and their banks are veritable jungles of vegetation, with swamps infested by

malaria-breeding insects, overgrown with dank bush, in the midst of which the hippo sleeps on in his eternal life.

The desert region stretches from Wadi-Halfa to Khartoum. Some day the deserts may be brought under cultivation and the black man, until now "desert-locked" in the heart of Africa, will develop great empires. Farther south there are districts comprising almost eleven degrees of latitude which are fertile and productive.

* * *

Only a few days away from haunts of civilization, we were all keen to return to Khartoum and consume a plate of real griddle cakes. "Folding our tents silently like the Arabs," we glided down the Nile to the city of civilization, named after the elephant's trunk, without seeing even one wild elephant at bay. For fifty cents at the circus in America, or a five-cent fare to the Bronz Zoo, I could see more wild animals and have peanuts and pink lemonade in the bargain.

As the sun was dropping beneath the horizon, the sky took on a fantasy of brilliant color. Pink, blue, gold, lavender, blended into a perfect glory of prismatic hues—a mass of rainbow-ribbed canopy. Then it turned to a deep royal purple, while directly above hung a crescent moon in silvery splendor. The waters of the river gloried in the reflection of all above it, while the curtain of an African night vignetted into a "fade-out" splendor of grayish gloom.

CHAPTER XXI

Back Again to Bagdad, the Traveler's Thoughts Return to Ancient Mesopotamia and Modern Iraq—Fascination of the Real Cradle of Civilization

KÚZA-NÁMA

LIX

Listen again. One evening at the Close
Of Ramazán, ere the better Moon arose,
In that old Potter's Shop I stood alone
With the clay Population round in Rows.

LX

And, strange to tell, among that Earthen Lot
Some could articulate, while others not:
And suddenly one more impatient cried—
"Who *is* the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?"

LXI

Then said another—"Surely not in vain
My Substance from the common Earth was ta'en,
That He who subtly wrought me into Shape
Should stamp me back to common Earth again."

LXII

Another said—"Why, ne'er a peevish Boy,
Would break the Bowl from which he drank in Joy;
Shall He that *made* the Vessel in pure Love
And Fancy, in an after Rage destroy!"

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*





Crossing the pontoon bridge at Felutah, over the Tigris River. Over this unstable, swaying roadbed of loose planks laid across stringers supported by the pontoons, the automobiles rattled merrily. Literally it is a "bridge of boats"



CHAPTER XXI

THUS ended my quest—not for facts, for they have been compiled long ere now by countless archeologists and explorers; but for personal impressions—to collect, to sift, to weigh them; to absorb the spirit of these dead and forgotten places; to glean some shred of the mental processes of those pioneers of the misty past, who, earnestly seeking the truth themselves, savagely destroyed any shadow and its substance that came between them and the light, even though it were another seeker after the selfsame truth. Reviewing the vivid scenes and stirring variety of events of a pilgrimage "To Bagdad and Back," I find my impressions of far-off Mesopotamia recurring again and again. To visit that ancient land just before it was removed from the maps of the world to pass into the oblivion of ancient history was like a glimpse of the finale of a great drama of epochs. In the actions of its stoic people, some of whom had never read or understood a word of the English language, there was indicated a desire to know more about and enjoy the benefits of our American ways. It was to them a reciprocal tale that rivalled the interest in "The Arabian Nights" which our boys and girls have read in the ever entrancing stories of the Court of Haroun Al Raschid, generation after generation.

There was a suggestion in what I observed of the backwash of the tides of ancient days. The very motions and methods of communication of one who did not know their language evidenced the same respect and veneration which the American tourist, in turn,

feels toward the people of this far-distant cradle of civilization. Hours of wonderment came to me in swift succession as I realized that there is not much difference after all among human beings the world over. The emotions and passions, appetites, impulses; the routine of working, worshipping and playing; eating, drinking and merry-making that come to all individuals in the span of years allotted the human life under the immutable laws of God and Nature are striking in their similarity. Witnessing an American mob in its fury, unrestrained by authority during the Boston police strike, I realized that the American mob feeling varies little, after all, from the religious fanatacism of the East. With all our vaunted civilization, we are not far away from the borderland of barbarism, and it would not take very much to revert to type under occidental as well as oriental conditions.

* * *

In the ancient land of Mesopotamia I felt I was the farthest oriented—so to speak—from our civilization that I had ever been in my world travels. I did not feel the isolation of distance, for was I not in the very spot from whence our Aryan race had sprung, and where modern solutions of true civilization began.

Of all I had seen there were three material things which called for profoundest contemplation:

One was the Tower of Babel—that cold, world-weary sentinel on its lonely mound at Barsiffa, where tradition wove a bedtime story too instructive to belittle.

Another was the top of the buried tower on the road leading into the city of Bagdad suggesting the hand of a drowning man raised above the waters beseeching rescue—and rescued its story will be, one day, as our expeditions decipher the scroll of "has been."

The deepest impression created in my mind was when I went a little way out in the desert from the throbbing, reeking hubbub of the every day activities of Bagdad, where stands a monument of the pretentions and dimensions of the Sphinx of Ghizeh. Not much of the chest and shoulders, but the neck, head and wig are distinct. For want of better, I named it the "Sphinx of Iraq."

No archeologist has ever attempted to fathom the mystery of its age. It has been sketched and photographed, but the written word concerning it has never been more than a passing comment—almost amounting to a reverent silence.

It stands for the last word in the unpenetrable past and suggests the starting point for the unpenetrable future—the greatest mystery of all.

How I thrilled to contemplate the very ashes of the hands long dead—the mallet and chisel defining its outline. It was at the witching hour as I sat down on a splinter of rock with my elbow on my knee, my chin in my palm to talk to my fellow-workman.

As I folded the goatskin wrapper which had held my evening meal and handed back with thanks the jug of wine, I answered his question: "Can you foretell the future? The other workmen fear you and say you are possessed by an evil spirit?"

I replied: "I cannot prophesy the future. I can only make a random guess. I am just a workman like yourself and only came here a few days journey ahead of you. You remember the day the sun became black at noon. I had only arrived the day before. And all the men and the overseers and even the engineers were frightened. Many seeking a cause tried to blame me because I was not afraid. The overseer

asked me if I could give any explanation. I said nothing was so great but that there was something greater, nothing so good but could be better, none so wise but could be wiser.

"Sometimes I feel as if I am living too soon—as if my soul belongs to a body which will not come to life for perhaps a hundred thousand moons. I allow myself to think those thoughts, dream those dreams, compare those pictures, and call it imagination."

"You must be a sage, then. These are not the tools of your real trade," indicating my oxhide satchel of mallet, chisels and measuring tools marked in cubits.

"Perhaps so," I replied, "but I should have been born under a different star for that, and what difference does it make if it is a few months too late or many centuries too soon. You may be right."

"Will you let your mind ride the ages and tell me a wonderful story of the future?"

I began solemnly.

"The sun has set and will set five thousand times more before I walk this earth."

The look of awe and apprehension on his countenance contemplating the ghost of a human being who would not begin to live for another fifty centuries thrilled me as much as his feelings thrilled him. What I knew of the past was the future which he was trying to visualize.

"Below is the muddy Euphrates, swirling and broiling, and pointing to the plains beyond, I told him that could he but live to see it, there would be a city of one hundred thousand homes and hearths and altars and millions of men and women—of priests and scholars, kings, laborers and mechanics like you and me. They will carve out palaces, temples, shrines and tombs that will command the admiration and the envy of all the

world; that thousands of camels and horses and donkeys, sheep and goats will swarm these plains for many a weary day's journey; that the soil beneath your feet will produce fruits and foods as yet unknown and these fair rivers before us will be insufficient to irrigate the land. A mighty king will rule over all, who will have mighty armies of men trained to observe the health of his nation and the happiness of his people against all comers. Then will come from a distant land the ruthless hordes of another king—hungry, greedy, rapacious; ruthless in its methods, who will wreck and destroy, like a plague of locusts, what they do not devour. Rivers of blood will run in the streets and dye these waters crimson as well as the waters beyond. And they will carry away everything valuable and will lead the men in chains to drag out a miserable existence in slavery, never again to feel the loving embrace of their wives or the prattle of their children on their knees—and as the despairing battalions march by the heaps of stark ruins they will envy the corrupting bodies of the dead being devoured by the ghoulish hyenas; and the rats will gnaw the rest of their bones—the vermin and the bats at last driven out by hunger will leave it a sterilized abomination of desolation.

* * *

"You will be dead and forgotten and your children's grandchildren will have come and gone and will have been no more. And other adventurers will come forward prowling among the ruins and try to discover the history of the triumphs and tragedies. They will argue out the details as they come to light and piece together the Mosaic of its history and in all that vast record taken from panels, tablets and inscribed scrolls that may have escaped fire and destruction, there will

not be one note to hint at the history or the meaning of this huge Deity which we are now carving. There will be as little known of the labors of our hands as the ashes of our urns.

"And the moon that you and I now see rising will mourn a thousand years the aching wilderness. Then will come a strange people who will again cultivate these fields and build their homes and grow for many hundreds of years and will build up a civilization eclipsing in knowledge, in beauty, and grandeur the wildest flights of fancy of the older order.



"But, think you, surely this will last. But so surely as the human race exists, so also will all the old rivalries, jealousies, and hates fan into flames the lust of its competitors and the human torrent will once again invade, destroy, and once more obliterate; yet the day when I shall have been born will be very remote; meanwhile upon the ruins, Phoenix-like from its ashes, more and more civilization will come to life and development, each one to a point of magnificence and importance over its predecesssors. Neighboring kings whose names by some lucky accident may be recorded

and preserved for all time will contemplate the glories and will say with sorrow at heart, 'This, too, will pass'—and pass it will, and a new star will appear in the sky and under that star in a far-off city across the desert to the west, the King of all Kings will be born—a King without courtiers—an Emperor without a throne, but whose armies of followers shall increase and grow until every human being on the face of this earth will be enrolled under His banners as His stalwart, loyal subjects.

* * *

"Perhaps two thousand years later I shall come into being in an age and time when our cities shall float on the surface of the water and move across the wide seas from one land to another. Strange camels will be fabricated by ourselves with no legs, but with enormous wings, and into them we shall bring the spirit of the Sun God revealed to us by the Creator. We shall ride the clouds to distant lands as well as to our daily tasks as easily as you and I shall ride our donkeys to our hearths and homes.

"A new substance will be discovered called 'steel,' with which we shall build our homes and workshops and the bazaars where we transact our business shall reach half way to the midday sun, holding as many people in comfort as the kings' armies. We shall build goofahs of the same material called 'steel,' with a closed lid and shall dive under the surface of seas and travel in the same comfort and safety as you and I might do walking down the banks of the rivers in front of us.

"We shall be able to use light to see through each other's bodies and we shall have little machines which shall bring the voices and thoughts and songs of our

loved ones from lands so far away that it would take many months, nay years, by camel travel to reach.

"And where will that magic material called 'steel' be found? We will make deep holes in the ground and climb down on ropes many thousand cubits. We shall find rocks there which we will burn out with magic fire and dynamite and send them to the surface, where with more fire in magic caldrons, the special 'steel' will be extracted."

His eye began to bulge with horror. His lips parted as if to speak and he closed and opened them several times again. His left hand grasped his throat and his right hand clawed the air as he rocked from side to side as if by sudden seizure, when, finally he gasped, "From hell, God of my fathers, save me." Then he vanished.

I awoke with a start, finding that for a fraction of a second I must have nodded after the exertions of the day.

And who would have the temerity to arise and say that in this age of steel and ocean liners, skyscrapers, autos, submarines, airplanes and X-rays, that we had reached the ultimate a year ago—yet television is newer than that. And yet with all these wonders achieved the mask of the future is just as impenetrable as ever.

Will you bet me a million yen against a lakh of rupees or a hundred sesterces to a five dollar bill that our present civilization will never pass? But have I not clearly shown you that all previous civilizations have disappeared—even though it has taken a long time; that is just what "never" is—a long time.

Traveling over the dreary waste of the land that once "blossomed as the rose," amid luxuriantly flowering fields, the heavy odor of bitumen now came from

lonely isolated spots—evidence that petroleum, of which the Mesopotamians know little, is one of Nature's heritages left in the wake of desolation. The familiar name of Mesopotamia mentioned in Holy Writ is now supplanted by that of Iraq, which is an even more ancient name given to the country between the two rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, known as Gihon and Pison in the opening chapters of the Bible.

This low country between the "Two Rivers," the records of antiquity indicate, was once the *ne plus ultra* of civilization, and at one time exercised the most powerful and intellectual influence known in the world.

There was a system of irrigation canals paralleling the rivers with dykes and lateroes which has never since been equalled. One of them, the Narawan canal dug by Nebuchadnezzar, was three hundred miles long by three hundred and thirty feet wide and commanded the admiration of Herodotus. It would reach from Jacksonville to Miami, Florida, and was seven times as wide as the Dixie Highway—facts for the notice of those interested in reclaiming the Everglades—and it was built by an unfortunate madman who on his hands and knees ate the grass in those far-off fields.



CHAPTER XXII

Voices from the Witching Weird Nooks of Old Chaldea seem to call back again to the Land where the Garden of Eden bloomed

LXIII

None answer'd this; but after Silence spake
A Vessel of a more ungainly Make:
"They sneer at me for leaning all awry;
What! did the Hand then of the Potter shake?"

LXIV

Said one—"Folks of a surly Tapster tell,
And daub his Visage with the Smoke of Hell;
They talk of some strict Testing of us—Pish!
He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well."

LXV

Then said another with a long-drawn Sigh,
"My Clay with long oblivion is gone dry:
But, fill me with the old familiar Juice,
Methinks I might recover by-and-bye!"

LXVI

So while the Vessels one by one were speaking,
One spied the little Crescent all were seeking:
And then they jogg'd each other, "Brother! Brother!
Hark to the Porter's Shoulder-knot a-creaking!"

From the ***Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám***

CHAPTER XXII

NATIONS have come and gone in the tides of human existence which are now but dimmed names in the traditions of the countries which remain; the records of the early eras are based almost entirely upon the discoveries made during comparatively recent excavations—mute reminders of human activities in other ages.

The stagnant waters lying under the low banks of the muddy streams fringed here and there with a tangle of tropical jungle and undergrowth reach out to the arid steppes. The view is a contrasting picture of desolation that can only be realized fully when actually living in the brackish miasma of the swamps and ruins buried beneath the black gray lava of recurring volcanic eruptions.

Gathered about a fire in a cave-like nook in the mud-hills, I came upon descendants of the old, dark-skinned races who seemed like witches. From the feeble flames they were trying to call up the magic pictures of a glorious past. Amidst one of these groups, I could almost hear water sizzling in the pots to the refrain of Shakespeare's lines:

> "Double, double, toil and trouble;
> Fire burn and cauldron bubble.
> Eye of newt and toe of frog,
> Wool of bat and tongue of dog."

In the weird expressions on the faces of the group there was a reflection of the environment which seemed to indicate that hope was nearly extinct as far as these

inhabitants of the earth were concerned. They seemed like stoic fatalists awaiting the death that would open to them the portals of happiness.

The upper country was just emerging from the blasting drought of blazing August days. The wide, treeless tracts of the steppes led on to the plateaux, and the distant mountains reaching into Persia rimmed a land that was the glory of Cyrus and Xerxes. For thousands of years these fertile lands have remained untouched, and here and there are masses of tall weeds where the water touches, but it is chiefly a land of withered weeds torn by the winds that blow with the force and fury of Dakota blizzards.

Here it was that Xenophon discovered the aromatic plants, including wormwood and thyme, mentioned in his records, the transcript of which has puzzled many a scholar trying to master the old language. The mournful willow bordered the stream for long intervals, supplanting the fertile and prosperous valleys of the Euphrates and the Tigris in the days when the great canals distributed the life-giving water of the land.

On the road to Mosul I met a descendant of the sheik Nasir, who was proud of the distinction that his forefathers had driven the Syrians from the ancient land of his fathers. In an old parchment he claimed to have the genealogical proof of his claim to ownership and title of rulership over a large portion of the desert domain.

In places the atmosphere seems to reek with the odor of corpses buried, in some instances, practically above ground. In some of these almost forgotten sites of cities, millions of people have lived and died without sanitary conditions, while in its wake has stalked the ghastly ghost of pestilence, century after century,

carrying with it the curse of uncleanliness. Down the river floated kaliks or rafts laid on goatskin bladders and surrounding them were flotillas of round boats made of plaited reeds pitched with asphalt from the surrounding bitumen beds.

For centuries past Mesopotamia has been under Persian, Indian, and Turkish influence. The Persian and the emigrating Parsee are descendants of the Aryan race who have found here in old Mesopotamia a rendezvous where the remnants of various races and civilizations meet and mingle in the melting pot of the country of Iraq, now under the mandate of Great Britain.

It is as difficult to follow the chronological order of the hundreds of races and nations that have occupied this land of Ur or Chaldea as it is to trace the origin of the American Indian. There are old maps showing the possible locations of the eighty-nine fortified cities and eight hundred and twenty smaller towns defended with towering walls which once were in this region. The modern archaeologist has found more in common with modern ideas here than in Egypt. The great Median Wall of the Greeks which ran across the country from river to river between the points of nearest approach was the forerunner of the great Chinese Wall.

Along the banks of some of the streams cucumbers and melons grow with rapidity and the vines appear almost as rank as the wild growth of the jungle. Here and there a sumach bush in flaming red gives the only touch of color to the landscape. Scraggly olive trees and little groves of figs in the mountains furnish a product of unusual sweetness, suggesting the flavor of dates, which is the dominant crop in this land of contrasts. The bee is as busy here as ever, and a land

described as "flowing with milk and honey" is more than a mere poetical phrase in these parts.

The population of the deserts is counted by tents rather than by individuals. I asked the number of inhabitants in one village and was told it numbered "three hundred tents"—just as they indicate the size of a farm in Vermont when they remark, "That's a ten-cow farm."

The grass and other vegetation surrounding the city of Mosul, which is the site of ancient Nineveh, was a most refreshing sight after the long journey over the steppes. Not far away the fighting continued between the Kurds and the Turks to settle the boundary lines, and the dispute was taken to the League of Nations by the Turkish government while the hostilities continued. The descendants of the Ottoman Empire are resisting vigorously the edict of the World War which tore from them the Asiatic domain which had so long been ruled with the iron hand under the flag of the crescent and star. Many of the old Turkish governors remain, hoping to encourage a feeling that will ultimately bring back through religious sentiment a demand for the restoration of Moslem rule. But the remembrance of the tyranny and oppression cannot be forgotten in the course of one generation.

* * *

The influence of Reza Khan, the present Premier of Persia, who rose from among the people and with an army of thirty thousand men saved Persia from a revolution, is strongly felt in Iraq. The old time Russian and German domination is passing; the old Shah, Ahmed Mirza, deposed in March, 1924, is still in exile, only the infant son remains of the royal house of the old empire, which is fast taking on the form of a repub-



Leaving the desert by the bridge leading to Ramadie in the ruins. One of Germany's greatest ambitions before the war was making possible a trip by the desert route from Beirut to Bagdad—only eight or nine days from London—at a much less cost than the old sea route. The bridge is solidly built over a subsidiary of the Euphrates, but its parapet has been hacked away in places



lic. Reza insisted upon doing away with the old and useless titles—even eliminating his own title of Khan. Parliament is functioning, and in company with Iraq, Persia is keeping pace with the new order of affairs.

* * *

The queen of Iraq returned from an extended journey to Paris and European capitals to her lord's domain a convert to the attire of the western world. An upheaval and social turmoil followed the laying aside of the veil by the women and the adoption of the garb of western civilization. In the vicinity of Teheran there has been much unrest, the result of the actions of the liberal-minded military governor of Resht, a Caspian seaport of great commercial importance, who has been making public speeches to aid the women in their movement and urging the discarding of the veil. Moslem womanhood in the neighboring countries, also, thanks to the new regime, is enjoying more of the liberties and privileges now accorded to her more fortunate sisters of the western world.

There have been several cases of women attired in European garb and minus the familiar veil holding demonstrations in Resht, but they were beaten and driven home by the males, who were later charged upon by the police. No casualties have been reported. It seems that the men consider it bad enough for the women to dress like their sisters of the West, but when they begin bobbing their hair, they consider the matter has gone entirely too far. There are some of us in the United States who would perhaps agree with the men of Persia if we had the courage. But seriously, the modernization of the Moslem world is evidently coming about through the women of the country. They welcome the new freedom that begins with the

assumption of male attire, neckties and shirts, and includes the voting franchise.

The wrath of the reactionists against women who refuse to wear the veil and appear in low-necked dresses is only paralleled by the conduct of the old-time Puritans in their wild fury against the Salem witches. The conservatism of the world calling for stable government comes from the influence of womankind, whether in the Orient or the Occident. Women are determined that their daughters shall not endure what they endured, and insist upon their sharing in what is conceived as being the real benefits of life in Europe and America. The old idea that paradise is for men only is rapidly passing.

The absence of coal and minerals in this age-old land, scientists have stated, is due to the burning out of the carbons and oils and gases in the bowels of the earth through frequent volcanic eruptions. A party of oil and coal prospectors from America were looking over the region which they declared was once a plentiful source of silver and jewels, which were as common in the days of the Arabian Nights as Brazilian diamonds in a beauty shop on Broadway.

CHAPTER XXIII

In the Cratered Dust of the Euphrates comes a Vision of the Future of My Own Country in the Perspective of the Centuries and a Distance reaching Half Way around the World

LXVII

Ah, with the Grape my fading Life provide,
And wash my Body whence the Life has died,
  And in a Windingsheet of Vine-leaf wrapt,
So bury me by some sweet Garden-side.

LXVIII

That ev'n my buried Ashes such a Snare
Of Perfume shall fling up into the Air,
  As not a True Believer passing by
But shall be overtaken unaware.

LXIX

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
Have done my Credit in Men's Eye much wrong:
  Have drown'd my Honour in a shallow Cup,
And sold my Reputation for a Song.

LXX

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore—but was I sober when I swore?
  And then and then came Spring and Rose-in-hand
My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

LXXI

And much as Wine has play'd the Infidel,
And robb'd me of my Robe of Honour—well,
  I often wonder what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the Goods they sell.

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

CHAPTER XXIII

MY last afternoon in Bagdad was enjoyed by chewing licorice root with the same delight as in school days when it was an offense subject to punishment with the "ruler" to be caught with the forbidden delicacy during study hours. The production of licorice in all its forms, from the wild plant, indicates that the palates of the children in modern Mesopotamia and in ancient Chaldea differed little from those of the modern American youth. The flavor of licorice is as much a favorite with Mesopotamian devotees as is Lady Nicotine cigarettes with American smokers. But the people of this ancient land are not so particular as to whether or not what they smoke is "all tobacco," providing that it has the flavor of licorice.

Trying to read a Persian newspaper published in Teheran, under the shade of an olive tree said to be a thousand years old, before the door of an old inn, was far different from the familiar experience of finding the Sunday paper wrapped in a "funny sheet" colored supplement on the doorstep. Printed on a soft paper and containing no advertisements, the text read from right to left, and the printed characters suggested the bird tracks on a cement walk after a rainy day. There were no glaring headlines, no baseball scores, no sport page, and the text, when translated to me, seemed as serious as the faces of the stolid orientals about me. There were no comic strips, and the paper made me homesick for a glimpse of Mutt and Jeff and a double-leaded editorial of the double-column type. When I heard it

read in Persian, in the very intonations with which Omar Khayyam recited his "Rubaiyat," I felt that the chief distinction of the paper was its obituary echo. There wasn't even a want-ad page to relieve the monotony.

In a library closeby I discovered an English copy of Matthew Arnold's "Light of Asia." Here I had traveled half-way 'round the world to find a quotation from the book that means more for peace than battleships and Leagues of Nations:

"The progress of civilization can only be attained by fixing public attention upon ideals worth while that have to do with the helping of others rather than by living entirely to ourselves."

Something within me snapped like the cord of a parachute, before my mental eyes unfolding. I then knew why I had come and this land defined the im-



pulse which repeatedly dinned the word "Bagdad" in my mind. I could not resist it. It continued persistent until finally I announced my desire to go and steep myself in the spirit of the East. My friends smiled in a pitying way. I even laughed at myself. But the impulse was all-powerful. I understood then the Mohammedan pilgrim's yearning to "See Mecca and die!" Though I had not reached the stage where I was willing to part with my spirit, I made casual inquiries of Douglas Fairbanks, then producing a picture called "The Thief of Bagdad." Secretary Hughes had heard of Bagdad, but neither one knew much about the city of the Caliphs and they left me to my own devices.

President Coolidge was indulgent. When I broke the news to him, seated placidly at his desk, that I was going to Bagdad, he sat up, took notice, and smiled as he pushed the button which set in motion the machinery to provide me with a passport. He evidently still cherishes his "Arabian Nights" dream and good-naturedly he humored mine.

* * *

I left my work in the middle of a September afternoon to undertake a journey of fifteen thousand miles, to travel by steamer, by airplane, by railroad, by camel and automobile across the arid deserts of Arabia and Persia to obtain facts first hand and to mingle with those peoples among

> "Those temples, palaces and piles stupendous,
> Of which the very ruins are tremendous"

to commune with the spirits of the past and interpret their messages.

The pity I felt for what had been destroyed was in no sense different from the pity for the destroyer whose

shade was pouring his sobbing contrition in my ear. How much more of their earliest history, philosophy and ideals would we know today if they had not ruthlessly destroyed them, leaving us to guess, as if the arch-vandal, Time, wasn't bad enough. How much farther in progress and wisdom and better human relationships would these people have been had the hand of destruction been stayed and the friendly hand of mutual help been extended.

* * *

There were representatives of all these peoples back in my own country from Gaul to far Cathay—from Hammerfest to Colombo. My own country—as a shock it came to me that it was as if only a few weeks ago that the Pilgrim Fathers landed in Massachusetts, leaving the Old World behind—why! Fleeing from intolerance, the Quakers, the Germans, the Paletines, the Huguenots—all the peaceful invaders of our fair land were squeezed out from the rank and file below by oppression from above and came over to build up the greatest of all civilizations. The liberty-loving Irish fighting their hopeless cause against intolerance sought an asylum where they could foregather and enjoy freedom far from their oppressors; but in the new "life, liberty and pursuit of happiness" they forgot—twenty-two millions of them forgot—their old hates and bitternesses.

Away from the scenes of their woes and trials they were able to visualize the keynote of all the quarrels, hate and grudges of the Old World intolerance. They had to get away from the picture to get the true perspective.

Just what I had done, myself. When the President bade me godspeed, little dreaming then that I would

write this message for his people, I had to get far away from the picture, like a fly crawling on the canvas.

And the verses of my Irish friend on the Persian Creation showed me clearly that we had a League of Nations working full blast since the declaration "all men are born free and equal."

There never was a more opportune moment than now to realize this staggering fact. There was the secret of the urge that sent me forth to learn that the kaleidoscope of time and fate was turning to crystallize a galaxy of new and beautiful order for our wondering eyes. The love and sympathy and mutual understanding, the splendid charity connoted by the Jews, Catholics, Salvation Army and even the city governments, helping to uplift and assist without wounding precious self-respect.

In all this ancient civilization there never was a hospital established—there were never institutions to provide for the unfortunate—there was no such thing as public philanthropy. An individual giving his fortune to serve the common public needs and helping his fellow-men to live and enjoy a distribution of the comforts of life was unknown. "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" is the phrase that to them epitomizes the tide of civilization from the West.

Our vast hospitals, the princely bequests for research, contrasts with the horrid spectacles I described in Damascus and all over the East: the date-sores in the children's faces, the flies and dirt caking the bodies of the little ones, the dread tuberculosis gnawing at the very breath of life. Ignorance and thoughtlessness compared with the way in which the fruits of our prosperity are used in defence of the weak; even we

hesitate to destroy a vicious life abrogating the Mosaic law—"With malice toward none and with charity toward all"—in remembrance of the imperishable words and immortal spirit of Lincoln.

CHAPTER XXIV

The Curtain falls on Memories and Scenes of Bagdad and Persia where across the Vast Expanse of Time I seemed to come close to Our Only Brothers of the Aryan Race in Asia

LXXII

Alas, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented Manuscript should close!
  The Nightingale that in the Branches sang,
Ah, whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

LXXIII

Ah Love! could thou and I with Fate conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
  Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

LXXIV

Ah, Moon of my Delight who know'st no wane,
The Moon of Heav'n is rising once again:
  How oft hereafter rising shall she look
Through this same Garden after me—in vain!

LXXV

And when Thyself with shining Foot shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the Grass,
  And in thy joyous Errand reach the Spot
Where I made one—turn down an empty Glass!

From the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

Tamám Shud

[*The End*]

CHAPTER XXIV

CROSSING the border of Persia, I began to feel the influence of Reza Khan, the Sirdar Sepah. While he is nominally Prime Minister, Minister of War, and Commander-in-chief of the army, he is the virtual ruler of Persia. He has attained a position more powerful than any other Persian statesman since the constitutional regime was introduced in 1906, and the story of his promotion and advance reads like one of the tales of "The Arabian Nights."

Four years ago he was comparatively unknown. The Bolshevist forces had already occupied the Province of Gilan and the British were retiring from northern Persia. It was then that a group of young Persians planned to save the capital, and they looked about for an energetic young officer to head the expedition. The choice fell on Reza Khan, and with seven hundred men he swept on to the capital and effected the capture. This proved his prowess and he was appointed commander of the Cossack Division, and later made Minister of War.

Now the young Persian began to be attracted by the achievements of his neighbor, Mustapha Kemal Pasha, and Reza took a leaf from the experiences of the Turkish leader. He re-organized the army and in two years had a well-equipped force of 35,000 men and was able to hold the various tribal chiefs at bay and establish a strong central government. The effort to make a Republica movement in Persia was quashed by the new Clerical party, who proclaimed it an offence to support the Republica movement.

Negotiations for the development of the oil fields and public improvements in northern Persia by means of American capital fell through. The old land of Omar Khayyam seems to be deserting the plan of government centralized in the power and personality of a Shah enabled to maintain his power only by force.

On the barren plains I met several groups of archaeologists. One of these parties was from the University of Pennsylvania. They were just like miners prospecting, or hunters on the way to a duck blind. They talked little, but thought a great deal, and studied and applied themselves to their problems with all the interest of a fan in a cross-word puzzle.

"An archaeologist does not expect more than one thrill in four months," said one of the party, "but we are finding them fast and furiously these days. We have made thousands of photographs that will bring a record of the grim old past to America."

* * *

The "covered wagons" of the overland trails in the days of the American plains have been replaced by express trains and automobiles, but think of the thrill when you look upon a Latin edict, dated 93 A. D.—an economic edict concerning a famine of that year. Here, in reality, one discovers "sermons in stones," as well as in bits of broken statuary and long-since crumbled buildings.

"Some day," one of the members of the party told me, "I hope to see the completed plans of ancient Babylonia with its skyscrapers, drainage system—and, in fact, all that existed in the days of the Apostle Paul when he visited Antioch."

The Johns Hopkins expedition has already found a copy of the "Res Gesti," the deeds of Augustus, an

autobiography of two hundred and fifty pieces of rock, put together like a bit of mosaic, which builds up a most complete autobiography of Augustus, one of the merry and gay rulers in the golden days of Rome.

Attired in abbreviated pantaloons, only reaching half-way from hips to their knees, wearing helmets and bronzed by the sun, I met more Americans in exploration work than from any other country. Many of the expeditions to Egypt and Asia Minor are led by American organizations. The University of Michigan, the University of California, the Chicago Field Museum, and many others are continuing the work with all the zest of big game hunters in Africa.

The Valley of the Euphrates might be called the Mississippi Valley of the Orient. It required a long stretch of imagination for me to picture the Garden of Eden or "Paradise Enow" hereabouts. And yet the atmospheric condition gives a suggestion of Paradise if there is plenty of the life-giving water about. The thought of the Garden of Eden arose when Jeff, the chauffeur, bought some apples not very far from the region of our first stopping place in the Orient—Bagdad. The apples were small, green and hard, not much larger than walnuts, and were suggestive of the variety that brought trouble to little Willie, whose fame is immortalized in the old, old ditty about Sister Sue. Strange to relate, the orientals do not like red apples—they prefer their fruit green or yellow—perhaps because of some belief that the apple in the Garden of Eden that caused all the trouble in this world was red.

Though there are few, if any, suggestions of Paradise in the region hereabouts, paradoxical as it may seem, the mind is excited and leaps from the grim and sordid

reality of the squalor everywhere seen, to revel in the splendor of Cinderella-like dreams.

One view of Bagdad suggests a quiet night in New York and the scenes from a New York Central train entering the city on Monday. New York's washing is far flung in the breeze, in the apartments and tenements, while here they were flying from iron balconies, indicating that some conditions of the Orient still exist in the metropolis of America. The climate throughout the greater part of Mesopotamia is not so different from that of the hot summer months in New York, except that the heat lasts longer and is much dryer. As in New York and Iraq, the people have long since discovered that the roofs of the houses are the most habitable spots in the country.

On the corner of the street in Mosul I met a young army officer who looked like the traffic cop at 42d Street and Broadway. He was Irish—a typical son of "the ould sod." I had quite a chat with him during which he said, "I have served with Allenby—been all through this region and the Holy Land, and what I don't know about that rubbish and those baked-clay tablets would fill a book."

The natives are superstitious and feel that the excavators' work is disrupting the peace and happiness of their ancestors, and to most of them the ghastly work is sacrilegious. They are interested in excavation, however, as long as the excavators bring enough gold to pay a large number of natives to look at workmen while they dig. But when they secure something that appears to have some value there is a revulsion of feeling. Graft may be a modern word and associated with politics, but if there is one thing that the average oriental enjoys, it is getting something for nothing—

the original get-rich-quick scheme came from the "fakirs" of the East.

Native confidence men have even sold stock in an astrological fraud with impunity. An Arabian organization was once formed for the sole purpose of transmitting messages from the stars and planets at so much per word—preferred stockholders were to get an extra tip or two as to the configuration of these heavenly bodies. The Ancients, you know, used the stars to forecast weather reports, as well as events of importance. According to the records, the signs of the Zodiac are the invention of Zoroaster, founder of the ancient faith of Parsi, and the same gentleman whose name appears in the dictionaries. He has a following that includes certain captains of industry whose study has enabled them to forecast their profits in advance.

It was this same Irish officer who introduced me to the Persian version of creation, a copy of which he said he always carries with him. The version is contained in the following lines:

"Never did they raise their eyes
To the vaults of heaven
To solve the mystery of the stars
But followed foolishly the thing
That was before their eyes."

* * *

At the conclusion of my journey through these regions I was again impressed with the fact that one who visits the Orient without the aid of a lively imagination is likely to return disappointed. The historic facts may exist in the books, but the evidence is buried deep in the "Sands of Time." The human mind dearly loves a puzzle, the element of chance, and a bit of gambling evidenced in the fascination in putting together the

different fragments of the contents of King Tut's tomb. The Orient is the prize puzzle of the times and it is being slowly but surely deciphered with a scientific precision under the impulse of stirring imagination. It makes one doff his hat in reverence when a devoted archaeologist passes. There are thousands of people in these times absorbed in hieroglyphics and historical mystery who are at work reconstructing ancient history and building up a scientific record of the past.

So far, whatever they have found in the way of historical data has served to corroborate the historical evidence of cities and countries mentioned in the Bible. Though record after record is being brought to light; though men of many races and of every creed are busily engaged in unraveling the tangles of ancient history, and marshaling the facts in orderly array, the authenticity of the Bible, as history, still holds its own against the agnostic challenge of the centuries.

ERRATUM

Page 286. Read *Edwin* Arnold for Matthew Arnold.



